

Hrawi discharged from hospital

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanese President Elias Hrawi has been discharged from a hospital after successfully undergoing heart treatment but will spend his last week as president recuperating at home. "The president has recovered from a ballooning procedure to clear a blocked artery and is now ready to leave the hospital," a statement issued late Saturday by the Sacre Coeur Hospital said. Hrawi was discharged shortly afterwards and headed straight to his home in Yarze Beirut's southeastern outskirts, where doctors said he must rest for one week. Hrawi, 73, was admitted to hospital Tuesday after a mild heart attack. He is due to step down as president on Nov. 24 at the end of an extended nine-year term. His successor is Emile Lahoud, who had been commander of Lebanon's military. Hrawi is scheduled to chair the last cabinet meeting of his term on Saturday. It was not clear if the president would attend or whether he will take part in Independence Day celebrations Nov. 22.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي.

Tarawneh off to Washington for meeting with King

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Fayed Tarawneh left for Washington early Sunday to meet His Majesty King Hussein and listen to his directives on issues of concern to Jordan. His Majesty King Hussein, who is expected to be back home in the last 10 days of December, confirmed on Friday earlier reports that he is completely cured of the lymph cancer that he fought against for the past four months at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. A Royal Decree was issued on Sunday appointing Minister of Justice Jawdat Shoul as acting prime minister and minister of defence during the prime minister's absence abroad.

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Military strike threat fades as Clinton says Iraq 'backed down'

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The threat of an imminent military strike on Iraq faded Sunday as U.S. President Bill Clinton said Baghdad had "backed down" and had offered full compliance with U.N. weapons inspections.

Clinton said in a televised statement that Iraq said it would comply "fully" with U.N. resolutions on weapons inspections.

"Last night Iraq agreed to meet the demands of the international community to cooperate fully with the United Nations weapons inspectors. Iraq has committed to unconditional compliance," he said.

Clinton stressed however that a pledge was "not enough" and Iraq "must live up to its obligations."

A day earlier Clinton had ordered a massive military strike on Iraq and then rescinded the order when he learned Iraq might be backing down.

Defence Secretary William Cohen described how close the standoff with Iraq came to spilling over into military conflict.

"It was close, and I would say very close," Cohen said.

National security advisor Sandy Berger, who joined Cohen at a press conference at the White House following Clinton's statement, said that if Iraqi President Saddam Hussein did not live up to the pledge, "we are prepared to act."

On Saturday the United States and Britain put plans for air strikes on hold after Iraq made a "positive" offer on resumption of inspections, in a letter to U.N. Secretary

General Kofi Annan.

Berger later Saturday rejected that offer as unacceptable, saying an annex to the message contained conditions on the resumption of inspections.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had earlier Sunday cut short a visit to Kuala Lumpur to return to Washington as tension continued to build.

However, Clinton said Sunday the Iraqis had spelled out their total compliance in three additional letters to the U.N. Security Council delivered late Saturday, after the statement by Berger rejecting the initial offer.

Clinton said the additional letters addressed the "holes" in the original Iraqi response, and "explicitly revoked" previous Iraqi decisions in August and October to suspend cooperation with U.N. inspections.

They made it clear that "they would not just let the inspectors back in to wander around in a very large country, but that their cooperation with them would be unconditional and complete."

The Security Council was meanwhile set to meet in New York to formulate a response to the Iraqi proposal.

The 15 Security Council members have been inching toward a consensus reaction after a closed-door debate lasting several hours late Saturday, diplomats in New York said.

In that debate, Washington — seeking written clarifications to assure that Iraq's offer was unconditional — were the only hold-outs preventing a consensus

U.S. lists 5 obligations

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton Sunday listed five obligations that must be fulfilled for the United States to judge that Iraq has complied with U.N. resolutions.

"Iraq has backed down, but that is not enough. Now Iraq must live up to its obligations," Clinton said at a White House press conference Sunday morning.

The U.S. president listed the following five obligations: "First, Iraq must resolve all outstanding issues raised by UNSCOM and the IAEA," Clinton said.

"Second, (Iraq) must give inspectors unfettered access to inspect and to monitor all sites they choose, with no restrictions or qualifications, consistent with the memorandum of understanding Iraq itself signed with (U.N.) Secretary-General (Kofi) Annan in February," Clinton said.

"Third, it must turn over all relevant documents," he said.

"Fourth, it must accept all weapons-of-mass-destruction-related resolutions."

"Fifth, it must not interfere with the independence or the professional expertise of the weapons inspectors," Clinton said.

at the marathon council meeting. Annan swiftly responded to Clinton's statement, saying "President Clinton's statesman-like response will be welcomed by the entire international community," his spokesman Fred Eckhardt told AFP.

In Baghdad, the ruling Baath Party's newspaper Al Thawra said "the wise decision of the Iraqi leadership has pulled the rug out from under the feet of the U.S. administration."

Saddam's offer to work with U.N. inspectors, reversing a break-off in cooperation announced Oct. 31, was "not taken out of fear of the U.S. threats but because of our sense of responsibility and a balanced appreciation of the situation," it said.

In contrast to a positive assessment from Annan,

Washington objected to an annex of the letter to the secretary general.

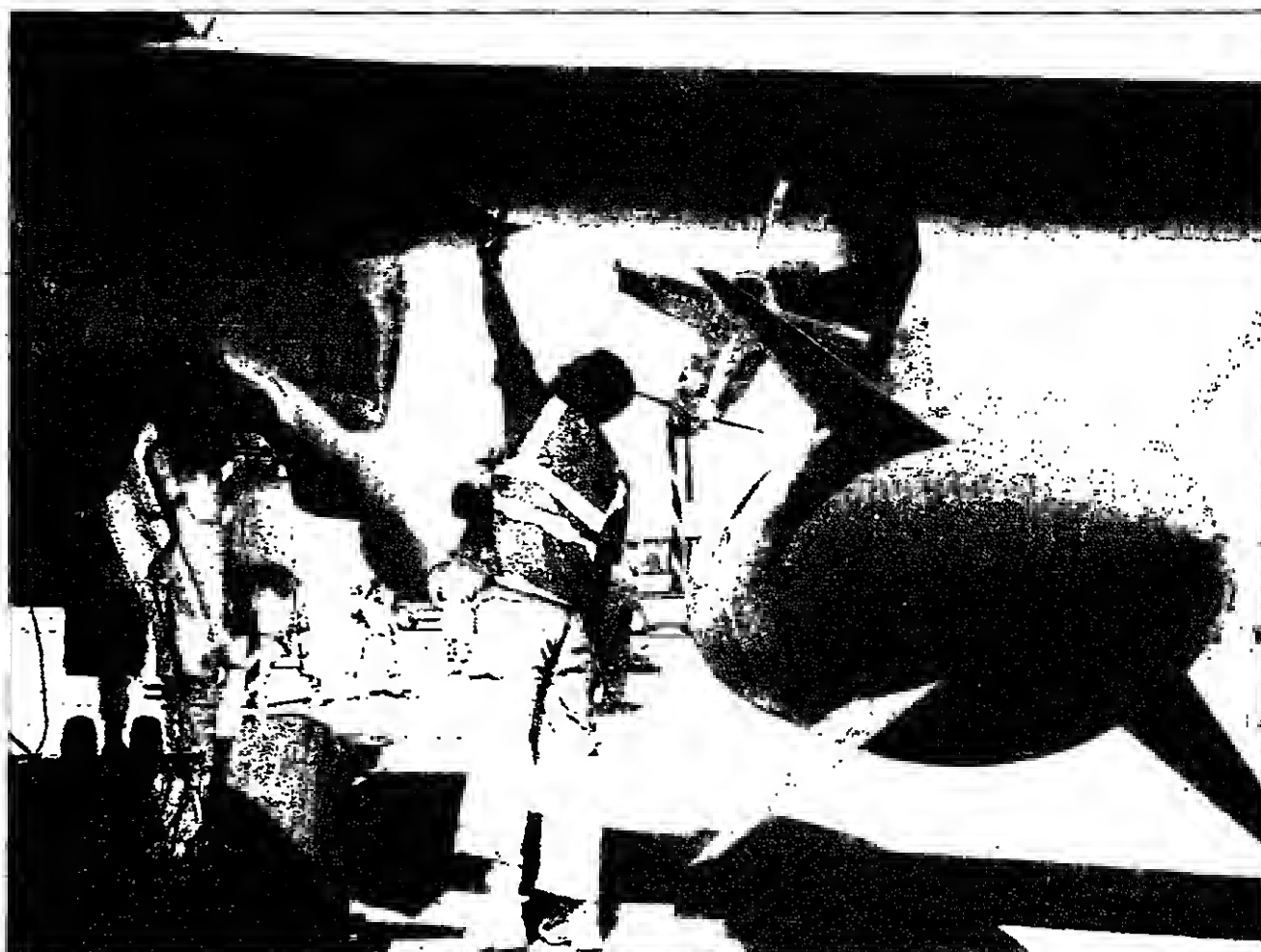
In the letter itself, Iraq reversed its break with the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) in charge of disarming the country.

But the attached annex called for assurances over a "comprehensive review" on sanctions proposed by the Security Council.

An oil embargo linked to UNSCOM's work has been in force since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

In a bid to build a consensus, Clinton, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and French President Jacques Chirac held a telephone conference late Saturday on the Iraq crisis.

The United States had meanwhile pressed on with a military buildup in the Gulf,



Air specialist, Mark Wanlers from Burton, England, checks the avionics of a British Tornad fighter-bomber plane at the Ali Al Salem Airbase near Kuwait City on Sunday. Iraq agreed to resume cooperation with weapons inspectors in line with U.N. resolutions (AP photo)

and a massive deployment of U.S. military personnel continued as planned, amid scepticism over Iraq's offer.

More than 130 U.S. military aircraft and some 21,500 troops were ordered to the Gulf last week, almost doubling the U.S. force already in the region.

When fully deployed, the

U.S. military buildup is set to involve some 44,000 soldiers, sailors, aviators and support personnel from the army, navy, air force and Marines.

It was the second such deployment this year. Military strikes were narrowly averted in February when Annan struck a last-minute deal in Baghdad on arms

inspections.

Amid the uncertainty, the United Nations has held off on returning more than 180 humanitarian personnel to their posts in Iraq. They were evacuated Wednesday and Thursday.

UNSCOM has also pulled its staff out of Iraq. On the streets of Baghdad,

residents greeted their government's pledge to work with UNSCOM with a mixture of relief and hope that it would bring the lifting of sanctions closer.

Karim, a 26-year-old doctor, said it was a victory for Iraq because it "moved things along and got the embargo back at the top of the news."

'Syria gave sweeping concessions to Turkey'

NICOSIA (AFP) — Syria made sweeping concessions in Turkey in a security accord last month which put an end to weeks of mounting tension, a text of the agreement obtained by AFP revealed Sunday.

Not only did Syria agree to crack down on the rebel Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) itself, but it undertook to use its huge influence in Lebanon to press for a similar crack-down there.

Syria also agreed to detailed Turkish monitoring of the agreement's implementation.

After the agreement was announced by Ankara on Oct. 20, Damascus would say only that there had been a "convergence of views" over the alleged support for the PKK which had prompted Turkish threats of military action.

"The two sides agreed to any activity aimed at Turkey's security and stability from Syrian territory," the official Syrian news agency SANA said.

Damascus made no mention of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan even though the agreement is widely believed to have forced him to leave Syria and start the search for a new base which ultimately led to his arrest in Italy on Thursday.

In the text, Syria pledges that "as of now, Ocalan is not in Syria. Syria will take all necessary measures to prevent the chairman of the PKK terrorist organisation from entering into Syrian territory and will instruct its authorities at border points to that effect."

(Continued on page 12)



A Palestinian youth throws a rock at Israeli soldiers as clashes break out on Sunday near the Palestinian village of Al Khader in the West Bank (AP photo)

Palestinians, Israelis clash over West Bank land seizure

AL KHADER (AFP) — Dozens of Palestinians clashed Sunday with Israeli troops bulldozing Arab land near here for construction of a special road for Jewish settlers.

Villagers tried to block the bulldozers and then threw stones at the soldiers, who responded with tear gas and rubber-coated metal bullets, witnesses said.

Several Palestinians were taken to hospital suffering from tear gas inhalation, including a member of the Palestinian legislative council, Salah Tamari, they said.

The incident occurred near this village south of Bethlehem where the Israeli government last week authorised the seizure of hundreds of hectares of Arab land for the construction of a "by-pass road" for Jewish settlers.

Israel decided to build a dozen such roads in connection with the transfer of more West Bank land to Palestinian control under the Wye River interim peace accord signed

with the Palestinians last month.

The roads are designed to permit Israelis to travel to and between Jewish settlements without driving through areas under Palestinian rule but Palestinians say the purpose is to expand Israeli control over territory ahead of negotiations on the final borders of the Palestinian entity.

Villagers in Al Khader said army bulldozers began uprooting hundreds of olive trees and vineyards in the area a week ago, but stopped to give residents time to exercise their right of appeal against land confiscation in Israeli courts.

"They stopped for a while but then returned Sunday morning even though the courts took no action," said villager Khader Salah.

"We will defend our land at any cost and will not allow them to confiscate our land," Salah told AFP.

The change in army policy followed a decision Thursday by Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu and his top security officials to go ahead with the by-pass road programme.

Israel is due to begin the first phase of West Bank pullbacks later this week, although the withdrawals could be jeopardised by a row between Israel and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat over his declared intention to declare unilaterally the establishment of a Palestinian state next year.

Ibrahim Ayyad, a member of the Palestinian National Council, or parliament-in-exile, condemned the Israeli land confiscations as a violation of clauses in the Wye River accord barring "unilateral actions" that change the status quo in the occupied territories.

"This is a conscious provocation timed to coincide with today's anniversary" of a 1988 PLO declaration of independence, he said.

"They have used excessive violence and this is a sign that Israel doesn't want peace," he said. "We have to force them to accept peace."

Arafat: 'Our weapons are ready' for statehood

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Despite U.S. efforts to jump-start the Wye accord, rhetoric escalated Sunday with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat renewing threats to declare a state next May and warning "our weapons are ready."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu countered that Arafat's threats to bypass negotiations and declare as state cast a "very dark shadow" over the peace process.

The sharpening rhetoric came as U.S. envoy Dennis Ross tried to get both sides to implement the Wye River memorandum, which calls for a 13 per cent Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank

in exchange for stepped up Palestinian security measures.

Ross met with Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai on Sunday, and Israeli and Palestinian negotiators were scheduled to confer later in the day.

Palestinian officials indicated Arafat's sharpened language came in response to Israeli threats to annex parts of the West Bank and as a result of the delay in implementing the West Bank withdrawal agreement.

The first pullback had been slated for Monday, but Israel said it would be delayed for a matter of "days."

Speaking to members of his Fatah faction in the West

Bank town of Ramallah, Arafat was quoted by Palestinian reporters as saying: "Our weapons are ready, and we are ready to use them if they ban us from praying in Jerusalem."

Defying Israel and the United States which have urged him to drop the demand, Arafat said "We will declare our state on the 4th of May next year. This is our right..."

Arafat spoke to a group of Fatah officials from occupied Jerusalem who had been barred from holding a meeting earlier in the day in that city by Israeli police (see page 12 story).

(Continued on page 12)

Hamas: No plans for ceasefire

AMMAN (AFP) — The largest Palestinian activist group Hamas has no plans to halt attacks against Israeli targets to smooth relations with Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority (PNA), a senior official of the movement said here Sunday. "These reports are completely without foundation — any such decision can only be taken by the leadership of (Hamas' military wing) the Izzeddine Al Qassem Brigades," Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghosheh told AFP.

"No member of Hamas' political leadership has the authority to decide on such a ceasefire," he said. A leading Hamas moderate hinted Friday that the movement might suspend attacks on Israeli targets in return for an end to a sweeping crackdown which the PNA launched late last month.

We "understand that there should be nothing that will embarrass the authority concerning its commitments" under agreements with Israel, Ismail Abu Shanab told AFP in Gaza City. His comments followed a meeting with Hamas's spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, who has been under house arrest in Gaza since Oct. 29.

Parliament will meet on Nov. 19

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Royal Decree was issued Sunday summoning Parliament for an extraordinary session on November 19. The decree issued by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said the convening of the extraordinary session was in accordance with Article 28 of the Constitution which states: "If the King's absence from the country extends for more than four months and the National Assembly is not in session, Parliament shall be summoned immediately to consider the matter." His Majesty King Hussein has been in the U.S. undergoing medical treatment since July 14.

Accordingly, Parliament will convene briefly on Thursday for a session chaired by the speaker of the Senate.

On Nov. 9 Minister of Information Nasser Judeh said the meeting will only be a formality since King Hussein is in the U.S. receiving medical treatment and the reason for his absence is known. During the session the prime minister is expected to address the assembly outlining the reason for the King's absence.

On the occasion of The Prophet's Ascension

Arab Bank is honoured to convey to

His Majesty King Hussein

and to the Arab and Islamic nations its felicitations and best wishes



ARAB BANK

Iranian president urges free flow of information in state-run media

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian President Mohammad Khatami urged the state-run broadcast media Sunday to make sure they handled news "transparently" and allowed a free flow of information.

"We must present everything transparently, without exaggeration or the creation of a personality cult around officials," Khatami said during a ceremony to launch a new broadcasting centre.

"We deceive ourselves if we think we can hide news of world events from the people because they will somehow learn about them, perhaps from irresponsible sources," he said.

Since the 1979 Islamic revolution, Iran's state-run radio and television have been under the direct supervision of the country's supreme leader, a position currently held by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

In their news coverage, they often try to avoid controversial domestic issues and give limited air time to events in the West, often portraying them negatively.

Prime time news programmes are often given over to live broadcasts of speeches by Iranian officials to the exclusion of coverage of major world events.

The president criticised the fact that "sometimes they make one-sided praise

of an official here while [ignoring] important international news."

"Our radio and television should not offer one-sided praise of the government's policies, because this will have a negative effect and is an insult to people's intelligence."

"In today's world, when people have easy access to information, if we try to give one-sided news, people will turn to other media to satisfy their desire to be informed," Khatami warned.

"In our country, people have questions which must be answered. Not to do so may have negative consequences," he said.

Iraqi Kurdish leader holds first talks in Damascus in two years

Meeting covers U.N.-Iraq crisis, relations

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani held talks with top Syrian officials here this week for the first time since 1996, aides told AFP Sunday.

The leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), one of the two main rival factions in northern Iraq, met Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam. The PUK's office here said.

The meeting focused on "the situation in the region in the light of the crisis between Iraq and the United Nations" and sought to "consolidate the longstanding ties between the PUK

leader and Syrian leaders," it said.

Talabani's visit to Damascus comes hot on the heels of a visit to Ankara where he assured Turkish officials the PUK is not seeking to establish a breakaway Kurdish state in northern Iraq and will not assist Kurdish rebels in southeastern Turkey.

The PUK signed a power-sharing agreement in Washington in September with its longtime rival the Kurdistan Democratic Party, sparking concern in Ankara that the agreement was the first step in the creation of an independent Kurdistan on its southeast-

ern border.

But Talabani assured Turkish officials that the agreement obliged the PUK to prevent rebels of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) using rear bases in northern Iraq in its long-standing rebellion in southeastern Turkey.

The KDP has helped Ankara combat the PKK in northern Iraq since May 1997, but Turkey has regularly accused the PUK of backing the rebels.

Syria itself signed a security agreement with Turkey last month undertaking to crack down on the PKK following Turkish threats of military action.



PROTESTS FOR OCAIAN'S RELEASE: An Iraqi Kurdish refugee woman wearing a white vest with 'hunger strike' written on it Sunday walks with her son in Athens past a Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) flag during a support rally for Kurdish guerrilla leader Abdullah Ocalan. Hundreds of Kurds are on hunger strike to protest the arrest of the PKK leader and to push for Italy to grant the PKK leader and Turkey's most wanted man political asylum (Reuters photo)

Lebanon moves to end controversy over street for Syrian president

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri formally inaugurated a brand new avenue Sunday named for Syrian President Hafez Assad, ending long road artery speeding travel to Beirut International Airport at the southern entrance of the capital.

"The avenue we are inaugurating today... is a symbol of Lebanon's, all of

officials who successfully lobbied to keep the name.

Instead the Lebanese authorities decided to give the Syrian president's name to more than a kilometre long new road artery speeding travel to Beirut International Airport at the southern entrance of the capital.

"The avenue we are inaugurating today... is a symbol of Lebanon's, all of

Lebanon's recognition, gratitude and loyalty to the one who stood by during misfortunes and helped in peace and towards reaching it," Hariri said.

He paid tribute to Assad for "leading the liberation process against the [Israeli] occupation" of southern Lebanon and the Golan Heights seized by the Jewish state from Syria during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

He also thanked Assad for "answering the call of the Lebanese" in 1976, when Syrian troops first entered Lebanon "to prevent the [1975-1990] civil war from spreading."

Hariri later unveiled an engraved marble plate commemorating the avenue's inauguration which was also attended by Syrian State Minister for Presidential Affairs Wahib Fadel.

Defence will not contest facts in case against Sheinbein

TEL AVIV (AP) — An American teenager appealing an extradition order will not contest the facts of the case if he stands trial for murder in Israel instead of returning to Maryland, a defence attorney told Israel's supreme court on Sunday.

David Libai, attorney for Samuel Sheinbein, said the case would focus on the mental condition of the 18-year-old from Silver Spring, Maryland, and would not involve the high cost of hiring witnesses from the United States.

"It will not be necessary to bring a single witness from abroad," Libai told the court. "We will admit to all the facts in the case. Our contention will be the men-

tal condition of the defendant."

However, Libai told the Associated Press during a break in the hearing that he would not describe the plea that would be entered or whether it would be innocent or guilty.

"It could be insanity, or something like that. I don't know," Libai said.

The Sheinbein case caused an uproar in Israel and the United States and threatened relations between the two allies. Members of the U.S. Congress called for delaying Israeli aid packages if Sheinbein was not returned. But the United States backed down when Israel's justice ministry rejected Sheinbein's citizenship

claims.

State attorneys led by Irit Kohn sought to reopen the issue of Sheinbein's citizenship, but the five-judge supreme court panel refused to deal with the question.

In September, Jerusalem District Judge Moshe Ravid upheld Sheinbein's claim to Israeli citizenship but said that his ties to the country were not strong enough to shield him from prosecution abroad. Israeli law allows for citizens to be tried in Israel instead of being extradited.

The summary of the 39-page appeal argues that the lower court decision clearing the way for extradition "reflects only the desire of the judge to arrive at a cer-

tain conclusion which is not anchored in the language of the law, and the language of the law cannot support it."

Sheinbein, who was sitting between two policemen, wore a grey shirt and conferred briefly with one of his attorneys before the appeal hearing began. His parents were sitting at the end of the first row.

Sheinbein's father Sol, who watched the proceedings Sunday with trembling lip and sweat streaking his face, told reporters he wanted his son tried in Israel because he believed his life would be in danger if he served time in a U.S. prison.

"In the United States, his situation will be very difficult, and it is possible that

he could be killed in prison there. I am very concerned for him," said Sol.

Sheinbein fled to Israel on Sept. 21, 1997, two days after the mutilated body of Tello was discovered in the garage of an empty house near the Sheinbein home. Shortly after arriving, he was picked up by police and hospitalized briefly, suffering from a drug overdose.

Aaron Needle, a second suspect, hanged himself in April on the eve of his murder trial in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Sheinbein claimed Israeli citizenship through his father who was born in pre-state Palestine which was under British rule before the Jewish state was founded in 1948.

Iran suspends pilgrimages to Iraq because of crisis

TEHRAN (AP) — Iran has suspended visits by Muslim pilgrims to Iraq because of the possibility of U.S. military strikes there, Akhbar newspaper reported Sunday.

The government has decided to stop all Iranian pilgrims going to Iraq, said the paper quoting an unnamed Iranian official.

The official said the decision, made last week, was

based on safety concerns and was indefinite.

"The time to restart the trips will depend on the political and military conditions in the region," the paper quoted the official as saying.

Iran and Iraq agreed in July to allow 12,000 Iranians a month to visit the holy cities of Karbala and Najaf in southern Iraq.

Mosques in the cities are the most sacred sites to Iran's majority Shiite Muslims after those in Saudi Arabia.

Hundreds of thousands of Iranians used to visit Iraq every year until 1980, when the two countries went to war and Iraq stopped giving visas. The war ended in 1988 but not the visa restrictions.

JORDAN TIMES FAX 5696183

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

12:05Patman
12:40 Animated Classic - Alice in Wonderland
13:30 Discover Magazine - Secrets of Science
14:00 Feature Film - "Big Foot"
15:30David Copper Field
16:00Neighbours
16:30 Des Chiffres Et Les Lettres
17:00Thalassa
18:15Wind at My Back
19:00Le Journal
19:15French Programme
19:30News headlines
20:00Parenthood
20:30The Internet Cafe
20:30 Big Sky - The Sky is Calling
21:15 Special Programme on the occasion of Al Isra' and Mi'raj
22:00News in English
22:30F.X.
23:10Keeping Up Appearance

PRAYER TIMES

04:40Fajr
06:00(Sunrise) Duha
11:20Dhuhr
14:16Asr
16:40Maghreb
18:00Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweilheh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel.

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Terra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

4622366

Anglican Church Tel. 4634853/4624811.

St. Arem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138

Church of Presentation, Sweilheh Tel. 5920146

The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757

The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4628052

The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church 4771331

The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Fine weather conditions will pre-

vail with temperatures tending to rise slightly. Clouds will appear at low altitudes and winds westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. Amman.....08/21

Aqaba.....13/28

Deserts.....07/23

Jordan Valley.....14/29

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 19 Aqaba 26 Humidity readings: Amman 37 per cent, Aqaba 29 per cent.

Following are the temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun.....10/21

Jerash.....17/28

Um Qays.....14/26

Madaba.....10/26

Petra.....09/26

Dead Sea.....19/32

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Issam Asamr.....4890504

Dr. Khalid M'addi.....5661144

Dr. Nidal As'ad.....4751672

Dr. Osama Hussein.....5347389

AMMAN:

Firas Pharmacy.....5661912

Al Salam Pharmacy.....4636730

Mayadah Pharmacy.....5537004

Rola Al Dawa Pharmacy.....5536169

IRBID:

Dr. Fayez Al Qadi.....(02)248743

Fon'ad Pharmacy.....(02)275360

ZARQA:

Dr. Randa Shahin.....(09)95710

Palestine Pharmacy.....(09)983562

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....4637111

Civil Defence Department.....5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue.....4630341

Civil Defence Emergency.....199

Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777

Fire Brigade.....4617101

Blood Bank.....4775121

Highway Police.....5343402

Traffic Police.....4896390

Public Security Dept.....4630321

Hotel Complaints.....5603800

Price Complaints.....5661176

Water & Sewage Complaints 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance).....121

Overseas Calls.....0132

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101

Abdullah Tel. Repairs.....5661101

Jordan Television.....4773111

Radio Jordan.....4774111

Water Authority.....5680100

J. Electricity Authority.....5815615

Electric Power Co.....4636381

RJ Flight Information.....44-53200

Queen Aliu Intl. Airport.....44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery.....5921199

The Islamic Abdi.....5666131/7

Hussein Medical Centre.....5856856

Luzmila.....4630195

Khalidi Maternity.....4642816

Akileh Maternity.....4642412

Jabal Amman Maternity.....4642362

Malhos. I. Amman.....4636140

Shmeisani.....5607071

Shmeisani Hospital.....5607431

Jordan Hospital.....5607550

University Hospital.....5353444

Al-Munsher Hospital.....5667227/9

Al-Ahli, Abdali.....5664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen.....4771013

Al-Bashir.....4775111/26

Army, Marika.....4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital.....5157100

Amal Hospital.....5607155

Al Aral Cancer Centre.....5353000

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital.....(09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital.....(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital.....(09)986731

Al Hikma Modern Hospital.....(09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital.....(02)275553

Roman Catholic Hospital.....1720

18:05Kuwait (RJ)

18:35Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)

19:05 Sharm Al Shaikh (add) (RJ)

20:30Bangkok, Sharjah (RJ)

21:00 Sharm Al Shaikh (add) (RJ)

21:45Cairo (add) (RJ)

23:00Aqaba (add) (RJ)

00:15Tel Aviv (add) (RJ)

03:00Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

Other Flights

08:20Alexandria (BA)

09:30Cairo (MS)

10:00Khartoum (SD)

13:20Bahrain (GF)

14:45Doha (QR)

15:05Vienna (OS)

15:25Dubai, Abu Dhabi (EK)

17:50Istanbul (SD)

18:40Beirut (ME)

19:15Frankfurt (LH)

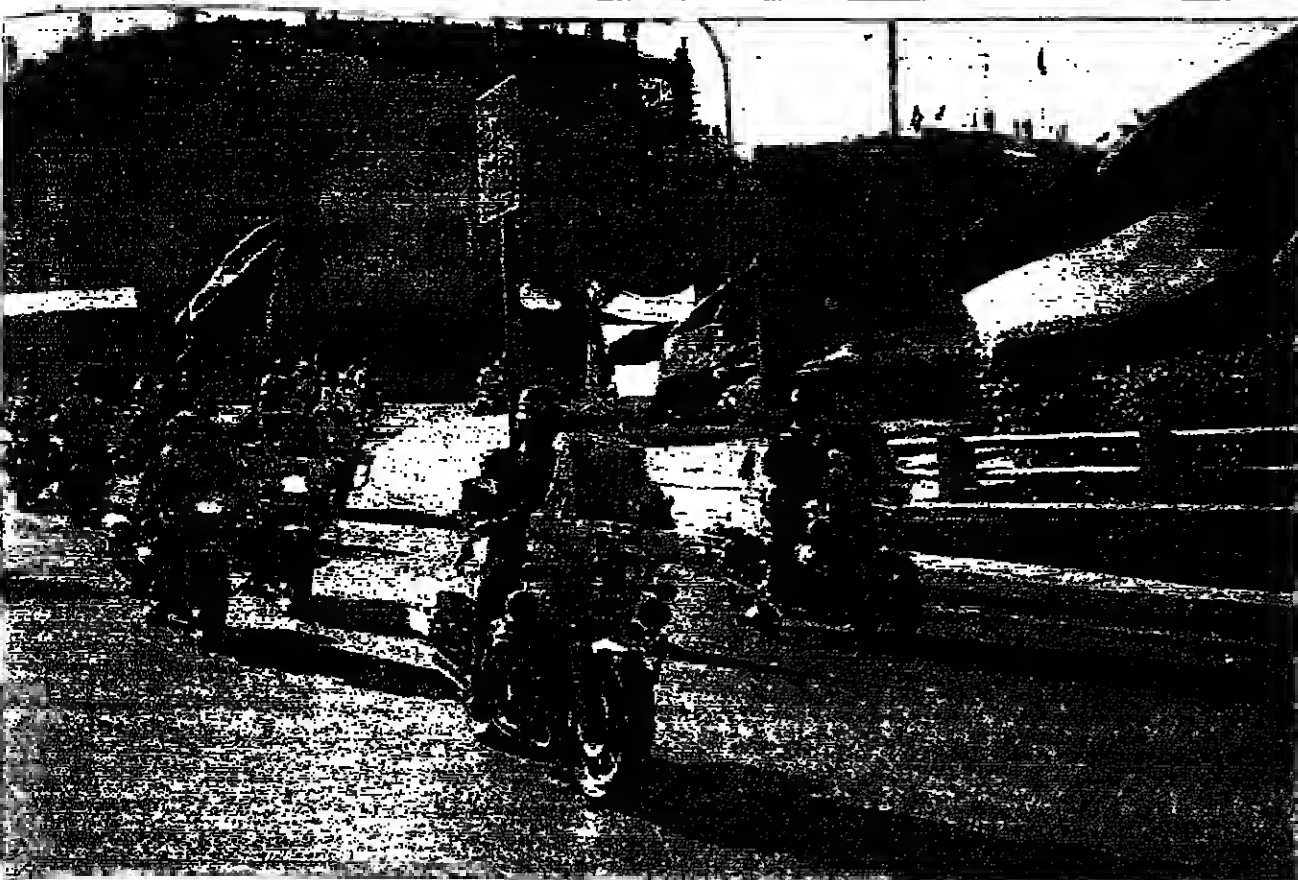
22:25Tel Aviv (LY)

01:25Amsterdam (KL)

01:25Athens (OA)

Royal Wings (RW)

09:30Aqaba (arriving at QAIA) (RW)



POLICEMEN CELEBRATE KING'S BIRTHDAY: Policemen in Amman take a break from official duties Sunday to celebrate His Majesty King Hussein's birthday. Carrying flags and driving motorcycles with pictures of the King, they drove in a motorcade throughout the city to mark the King's 63rd birthday (Photo by Yousef Allan)

King receives messages marking birthday

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday received messages of congratulations on the occasion of his 63rd birthday from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz, Bahraini Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Ben Issa Al Khalifeh and French President Jacques Chirac.

The King also received messages of congratulations marking the occasion of Isra wal Mi'raj (Prophet Mohammad's journey to heaven) on Monday from Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh, Lower House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour, Senate Speaker Zeid Rifai, the head of the Higher Judicial Council and the Court of Cassation, Taher Hikmat, the chief Islamic justice and King Hussein's Islamic affair consultant, the head of the Higher Court, Suleiman Awajan.

Public Security Department chief Nassouh Muhieddin, the director of the Intelligence Department, Samih Batkhi, Civil Defence Department Director Theeh Maani, the commander of the Palestinian Liberation Army, Faisal Fahoum, Amman Mayor Nidal Hadid and Amman Governor Talat Nawaiseh, as well as other senior officials.

Meanwhile, under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, the national committee in charge of celebrating Islamic holidays today will hold a religious celebration at the meeting hall of the King Abdullah Mosque to commemorate Isra wal Mi'raj.

Iraq crisis prompts contingency plans by diplomatic missions

Expected return of U.N. staff to Baghdad delayed

By Francesca Ciriaci

AMMAN — Diplomatic missions Sunday were rushing to prepare and implement emergency evacuation plans as well as readying to accommodate hundreds of their nationals evacuated from Iraq and expected in Jordan late last night of today.

Reservations for researchers and scholars at foreign centres and institutes in Amman were cancelled in order to accommodate personnel and families of diplomats coming from Iraq.

Some embassies started tracing their nationals residing in the Kingdom to enquire about their passport numbers, current whereabouts, and telephone numbers where they could be reached.

However, citing security reasons, most diplomats in Amman declined to release either the details of the evacuation plans or the number of people they were expecting to arrive from Iraq.

Meanwhile, a U.N. spokesperson announced that the U.N. humanitarian personnel evacuated to Jordan late last week will remain here while the Security Council continues its talks on the latest Iraqi crisis.

"Because of the extended Security Council deliberations, it has been decided that the staff should remain in Amman for the time being," Eric Falt told a press conference.

In the latest crisis over arms inspections, more than 100

members of U.N. humanitarian agencies left Baghdad for Amman on Wednesday following U.S. threats of military strikes. Dozens of arms inspectors and other international personnel were instead flown to Bahrain.

U.N. humanitarian staff arrived here on Thursday afternoon after a "nightmarish" 30-hour journey by bus covering the 1,000 kilometres between the Iraqi and Jordanian capitals.

Iraq has argued that the decision to evacuate U.N. personnel was taken unilaterally by the U.S. and that Secretary General Kofi Annan was not even aware of the evacuation plan.

Upon arrival at an Amman hotel on Thursday, UNDP spokesperson Abdullah Odeh told reporters that he had "no reasons to believe that the [evacuation] decision was not made in the appropriate circles," but added that he did not have other information on the issue.

In an initial positive assessment of an Iraqi offer on Saturday to restore cooperation with the arms inspectors, the U.N. had planned to send back its humanitarian staff on Sunday.

But the decision was reversed following U.S. objections that the Iraqi offer appeared to be conditional.

U.S. President Bill Clinton stated late yesterday that Iraq had avoided a military strike for the time being, but was required to fully comply with

U.N. resolutions and allow unfettered access to arms inspectors.

U.N. officials were not available last night to say what effect Clinton's statement would have on the humanitarian personnel currently in Amman.

"We are anxious to have them return as soon as possible and to return to full operation as soon as possible," Falt said at yesterday's press conference, before Clinton's statement.

He had added that a 50-strong skeleton staff had remained in Baghdad and that stocks of food and medicine supplied under the oil-for-food programme were not in danger of running out soon due to the slowdown in the programme because of the lack of personnel.

"Stock positions right now are fairly satisfactory. It is something that is manageable for the time being, and there are no real concerns at present," Falt had said.

Evacuation plans for European nationals were being coordinated by the Austrian embassy, whose government currently holds the six-month rotating presidency of the EU.

Orders had come from Brussels to set up emergency plans for European Commission offices staff, while most Western countries were reducing to a handful their representatives in Iraq.

"The situation in Baghdad seemed normal — if one can use this word about a country

which has been under embargo for seven and a half years," said one Italian official who arrived from the Iraqi capital on Thursday.

Sources close to the Chinese embassy yesterday said that some 100 Chinese diplomats and their families had been evacuated and were expected in Amman today.

Jordan, for its part, has heightened security, officials said.

A two-day leave for security personnel on the occasion of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday, which fell on Saturday, was cancelled because of fears that a government ban on pro-Iraq rallies could be defied.

The government, worried about a repeat of pro-Iraq fervor during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis, banned public demonstrations of solidarity with Baghdad last February at the height of the last major U.N.-Iraq standoff.

International news agencies quoted officials as saying that defences would be strengthened on the heavily patrolled desert border with Iraq in case any U.S. military action led to a refugee influx.

During the February stand-off, Jordan said it was willing to provide assistance to the Iraqi people, but only on their national soil.

Plans were leaked to the press then that Jordan was planning to help in setting up camps on the Iraqi side of its 100-kilometre border with Iraq.

Queen commends efforts of Jordanian community in Germany

BONN — Her Majesty Queen Noor has said His Majesty King Hussein is completely cured of his illness after responding very positively to chemotherapy treatment at the Mayo Clinic.

The Queen added that the King will return soon to Jordan after the completion of various stages of treatment.

The Queen's announcement was part of a message to a major celebration organised by the Jordanian community in Germany on King Hussein's birthday.

Conveying the message on the Queen's behalf was Sami Gammo, council member of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), who also relayed to the Jordanian community the deep appreciation of the King and Queen of the community's efforts to strengthen Jordan's relations with Germany and other nations.

In the address at the celebration, organised in Bonn on Saturday evening, the Queen said the Kingdom has

been following with appreciation and admiration the activities of the Jordanian community in Germany and their continuous efforts to help in the development of their homeland.

The Queen outlined the NHF's activities and programmes since its establishment in 1985, noting that the foundation has been instrumental in alleviating poverty and helping address unemployment through programmes and projects aimed at improving the quality of life of Jordanians, particularly in rural regions.

Jaber Ramahi, a prominent Jordanian community member in Germany, announced during the celebrations that he was donating DM20,000 (approximately \$12,000) to the NHF.

Jordanian Ambassador to Germany Hussein Hamami delivered an address outlining the Kingdom's development under King Hussein and his efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.



The Kurdi family

Twins born on King's birthday named after King, Queen

AMMAN (J.T.) — Twins born on Saturday, His Majesty King Hussein's birthday, to Fares and Kiyah Kurdi from Amman were named Hussein and Noor after the King and Her Majesty Queen Noor.

The girl weighed 3.1 kilograms and the boy weighed 2.5 kilograms, according to Hashem Hroub, the obstetrician who conducted the delivery.

Hroub added that the mother and the twins were doing well.

Hroub said the parents were expecting the delivery to take place on Nov. 19 rather than Saturday.

"We decided to go ahead with the delivery, but the position of the twins required a caesarean section," said Hroub.

Expressing delight over the coincidence and thanking the doctor and the hospital staff, the parents said they were proud to have the twins born on the King's birthday and decided to name them Hussein and Noor because the King's birthday was very dear to their hearts. They both wished the King a quick recovery and safe return home.

Two Egyptians executed for 1997 double murder

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — Two Egyptian nationals convicted of robbing and murdering two people in March were hanged last week at Swaga Prison, judicial sources said.

Hani Fadi, 21, and his 19-year-old brother Hisham were found guilty of murdering 63-year-old Jubrael Iskandar Nino and his 32-year-old secretary Fatimah Hanania in June 1997 in Amman.

According to court documents, the defendants plotted to kill both Nino and Hanania because Hisham, who was employed by Nino, was continuously being humiliated by him.

On the morning of the incident, the court stated, the two defendants went to Nino's office with an iron bar and a switchblade.

Upon Hanania's arrival at the office, it said, Hisham struck her on the head with the iron bar and stabbed her several times with the switchblade. The two then pulled her body into the bathroom.

The court added that when Nino entered the office 15 minutes later, the two defendants struck him with the iron bar. The defendants then forced Nino to sign two blank checks before strangling him, the court said.

The defendants stole JD40 and some jewellery from the office, then fled to

Aqaba, where they were apprehended by the authorities two days later, the court said.

Thursday's executions, the fifth and sixth reported this year, were attended by the prison's director, the criminal prosecutor, and representatives from the Interior Ministry, the Forensic Department and the Badia Forces, and other officials.

The executions were ratified by the Court of Cassation, the Cabinet and a Royal Decree.

Last year, 11 people were put to death after being convicted of committing several premeditated murders and sexual assaults against children.

Society for physically challenged persons opens new headquarters

By Suba Ma'ayeh

AMMAN — In an effort to help disabled people become integrated in society and to improve their quality of life, the Families and Friends Society of Persons with Disabilities recently opened its new headquarters.

The society, established in 1991, supports mentally and physically disabled children and adults who currently receive no services due to the severity of their disability, their advanced age and, for some, the long distances from their homes to centres that provide these services.

Rima Zureikat, chairperson of the society, insisted that having support groups for parents of children who suffer from various disabilities helps them accept their disabled children instead of shunning them.

She explained that the society developed after mothers of disabled children got together and started a small support group.

"The mothers are without support and they are suffering from negative attitudes... we thought of getting together, sharing experiences and supporting each other, and becoming a pressure group to help enforce the law," Zureikat told the Jordan Times in an inter-

view. "By getting together, we realised that the intensity of the suffering is further aggravated due to the fact that parents with disabled children go through a phase of self-denial," she said.

She stressed that awareness and acceptance leads to early intervention and decreases the chances of other complications. "A minor disability... a very simple case might become complicated if proper rehabilitation and early intervention are neglected," stressed Zureikat, whose own daughter, who suffers from cerebral palsy, is now studying at a university in England.

The World Health Organisation estimates that the number of those suffering from disabilities is nearly 10 per cent of the global population. In Jordan, a 10 per cent rate would mean around 400,000 physically and mentally challenged citizens.

A 1993 law granted disabled people rights in terms of their integration into society, including education, medical treatment, employment and a suitable environment that would allow them freedom of movement.

The Families and Friends Society, which is mandated to promote and guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities, currently conducts three

programmes run by 13 volunteers in order to improve disabled people's quality of life and to help integrate into society.

One such programme is the Tuesday School, which trains mothers and their children in a wide range of educational and communication skills. The activities target physically disabled children above the age of five.

In addition to physiotherapy, some children are trained to read, and others who are unable to speak are taught how to use sign language, said Zureikat. She also pointed out that parents are encouraged to follow up on programmes at home.

Another activity, the Portage Programme, is a home visiting service for families. Parents are trained on how to deal with their disabled children, from birth to nine years.

A third programme, the "Friendship Club," provides recreational activities for youth aged 16 and older. It offers youngsters the chance to pursue a favourite hobby and provides a safe and stimulating environment to enhance and promote skills.

The new premises of the society, located in Arjan, were inaugurated under the auspices of Her Royal Highness Princess Majda.

what's going on

CONCERTS

* Musical performance by the German Military Music-Corps and the Jordan Armed Forces Military Band at the Palace of Culture on Tuesday Nov. 17 at 8:00 p.m. (The concert, held under Royal patronage, marks His Majesty King Hussein's birthday.)

* Classical music performance by Iraqi group Sorcar at Darat Al Fann, Jabel Weibdeh on Tuesday Nov. 17 at 7:00 p.m.

FILM

* "Trois hommes et un couffin" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabel Weibdeh at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

LECTURES

* "A Comprehensive Historical Review of More Than 100 Years of Archaeological Excavations in Jordan by Dr. Hans-Dieter Bliemert at Goethe-Institut, Jabel Amman on Monday Nov. 16 at 6:00 p.m.

* "Rules and Methods of Preserving and Restoring Historical Monuments" by Dr. Helge Fischer at Goethe-Institut, Jabel Amman on Tuesday Nov. 17 at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Display of Jordan River Foundation (JRF) 1998 autumn/winter collection, entitled "Falling Leaves" at the JRF showroom, Jabel Amman (Tel. 4613081), until Nov. 30.

* "Crossroads of Civilisations: More Than 100 Years of German Archaeological Activities in Jordan" (sponsored by the German Protestant Institute in cooperation with Petra Stone Preservation) at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Nov. 28.

* A three-dimensional exhibition on canvas by Susana Caldwell, Darleen Karapowicz, and Rawabi, Abu Ghazaleh Silawi at the Jordan Arts and Crafts Centre (Artsana), Jabel Amman, of the Second Circle, until Nov. 20 (Tel. 4647855).

* Exhibition of watercolours by Makram Haghdouga at Instituto Cervantes, Jabel Amman, until Nov. 24.

* "Masterworks of the Spanish Contemporary Architecture and Presentation of Architecture Guide: Spain 1920 - 2000" at the University of Jordan, Faculty of Engineering, until Nov. 20.

* Paintings by Jordanian artist Mohammed Abu Aziz at the French Cultural Centre, Jabel Amman, until Nov. 28.

52 Hindu pilgrims killed in Indian hilltop shrine collapse

TRIVANDRUM, India (AFP) — At least 52 Hindu devotees were killed and more than 50 injured when a hill at a pilgrimage site in the southern Indian state of Kerala caved in beneath them, witnesses said Friday.

Forty-one of the injured were described as being in a critical condition. The dead included three women and six children.

The disaster occurred at about 7:00 p.m. Thursday (1330 GMT) as pilgrims massed to view a "celestial light" at the Sabarimala hilltop shrine in Pathanamthitta district, more than 200 kilometres north of the state capital Trivandrum.

An estimated 1.5 million barefoot Hindu pilgrims, all dressed in black — were gathered around the site when the disaster occurred.

The vast majority were male, with females barred from the site except for pre-pubescent girls and post-menopausal women.

According to several witnesses, a partial collapse of the 18-metre hill triggered a stampede which caused a larger section to cave in.

"First, a small boy fell off when a portion of the hill gave way about five metres from the top. Then everybody panicked," one witness said.

Police said there were at least 10,000 people on the hillside when the accident occurred. The majority of pilgrims were from Andhra Pradesh and the neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Most of the victims were either trampled to death or buried in the collapse, although witnesses said many were killed when they grabbed hold of a high-voltage electricity wire to try to break their fall.

Some fell as far as 12 metres to their deaths. Police and firefighters headed the rescue, digging out those who had been buried in the collapse and ferrying the injured to hospital.

"The pilgrims were helping out as best they could and at least 100 people were rescued from the pile of mud," another witness said.

The tragedy occurred as the pilgrims were jostling for a vantage point to watch a "celestial light" believed to appear in the sky at dusk on certain holy days.

Police said many of the pilgrims had taken up places on the hill two days before. "They refused to get off the hill and the numbers just kept on increasing," one officer said.

Press reports said the breaking of a restraining rope was partly to blame for the stampede. Police said 25 people died on the spot while 27 others died of injuries in hospital.

The temple trust announced a compensation of 10,000 rupees (\$238) to the families of each of the victims killed.

Indian President, K.R. Narayanan, who was born in Kerala, expressed "shock and grief" at the disaster, while Prime Minister Atal

Behari Vajpayee conveyed his "heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families."

Thursday's gathering was the culmination of a two-month long pilgrimage to the Sabarimala shrine.

The pilgrims were carrying miniature models of the Sabarimala temple made of reed and decorated with candles and oil lamps that would later be set afloat on a nearby river.

"Usually one or two Sabarimala pilgrims die every year from illness or exhaustion," said one state official.

"This is the first time in more than five decades that a tragedy of this scale has happened. We have ordered a probe but the shrine will remain open for another four days."

A police spokesman said the toll was bound to rise, given the condition of some of the injured.

Indian pilgrimage sites, often located in isolated, inaccessible areas, have exerted a heavy death toll over the years, often as the result of ill-prepared devotees ignoring official warnings.

In 1996 more than 200 pilgrims died when they were caught in a blizzard en route to the sacred Amarnath cave site in the northern state of Kashmir.

In August last year, 60 pilgrims were among more than 200 people who died when a landslide buried an entire mountain village in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.



A relative of a hill collapse victim tries to identify bodies with help of a policeman at Pathanamthitta hospital. At least 52 people were killed after the 60-foot hill partially collapsed in southern Indian Kerala state during an annual Hindu pilgrimage (Reuters photo)

Congo peace efforts flounder once more

LUSAKA (R) — A planned summit of African leaders in Zambia to bring peace to war-torn Democratic Republic of the Congo floundered again Friday after a no-show by Congolese President Laurent Kabila and rebel forces.

Zambian President Frederick Chiluba said the meeting, which was scheduled for Saturday, had been postponed to allow regional defence and foreign ministers time to draft a framework document that could be presented to heads of state.

Prospects for Saturday's summit dimmed after attempts by Chiluba to broker face-to-face talks between Congolese President Laurent Kabila and rebel leaders in the Zambian capital Lusaka faltered.

Congo state radio said Friday Kabila refused to meet representatives of the rebel group, the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD), unless they came to Kinshasa.

Kabila repeated this position when he met Chiluba in Lubumbashi, in southern Congo, Thursday, the radio said.

"I should admit that I was over-ambitious," the government-owned Times of Zambia quoted Chiluba as saying after returning to Zambia from a

meeting with Kabila in the Congolese city of Lubumbashi Thursday.

Regional defence and foreign ministers already in Lusaka said they would hold closed-door talks in the Zambian capital over the next two or three days.

"We came to an understanding that the ministers should first thrash out a document that has the consensus of all the parties and then the prime ministers can come and ratify it," said Tanzanian Foreign Minister Jakaya Kikwete.

"On that basis we agreed it would be premature to get the presidents to meet now. The summit will be called only once they have finished their talks and agreed," Kikwete said.

Ministerial talks, including officials from the 14-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC), Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations were scheduled to start at 3 p.m. (1300 GMT).

Kabila's Foreign Minister Jean-Charles Akoto was due to attend the talks but no representatives from the rebel RCD had arrived in Lusaka.

Kabila — who is backed by forces from Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and Chad — has refused to recognise the umbrella rebel group as a legiti-

mate political and military force, but has offered to meet the rebels in his capital Kinshasa.

In Namibia's capital Windhoek, a government official said Kabila and his allies would meet on Sunday to plot a way ahead.

Regional heavyweights, particularly South Africa, have made rebel participation a condition of its involvement in the planned summit, which has already been postponed twice.

Chiluba had been spearheading attempts to broker direct talks between Kabila and the rebel RCD, which is backed by Uganda and Rwanda, to end the six-month-old war.

Forces of RCD leader Ernest Wamba dia Wamba control key towns and cities in the east of the vast, mineral-rich former Zaire, including Kisangani.

"We want broader consultation. We want to allow the officials already meeting here to work all round until after Sunday. Then I can call for the summit," the Times of Zambia quoted Chiluba as saying.

Libya's foreign minister is also in Lusaka following on from talks last month between Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi and dia Wamba and also with Uganda President Yoweri Museveni.

Pakistani man jailed for sex with Anwar to be released

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — A Pakistani man jailed for having sex with sacked Malaysian Deputy Premier Anwar Ibrahim will be released next week, his lawyers said Friday.

Munawar Ahmad Anees will be freed Monday, two months before the end of his six-month jail sentence, said his defence counsel Balwant Singh Sidhu.

But another man accused of having sex with Anwar had a request to get his passport back rejected.

"Munawar gets one third remission from his sentence for good behaviour, so he effectively only serves four months," Balwant told AFP, adding he would still pursue an appeal against conviction.

"My client will definitely want to proceed with his appeal case. He wants to clear his name," he said.

Munawar, an Islamic scholar who has written speeches for Anwar, is married to an Algerian woman and has two children with French nationality.

Balwant said Munawar was still being detained at a hospital

psychiatric ward as "he needed some attention," but declined to give details.

Munawar was first admitted to hospital after he suffered a heart attack following his conviction. He was later transferred to the psychiatric ward and has remained in hospital.

Munawar and Anwar's adopted brother, Sukma Darmawan, are appealing their six-month sentences, which were handed down for sodomy in separate trials on Sept. 19, a day before Anwar himself was arrested.

Both alleged police forced them to confess they were sodomised by Anwar, now on trial on four corruption charges. Sukma was released on bail last month pending his appeal.

But Sukma's application for the return of his confiscated passport to enable him to go back to Indonesia to celebrate the Muslim holiday next week with his family was rejected Friday by a high court.

Justice Abdul Wahab Patil was quoted as saying by the official Bernama news agency that Sukma had been convicted and yet to complete his jail term

following his bail.

"It will set a precedence if I allow this application," the judge said. Sukma just smiled when he was approached by reporters, Bernama added.

It was unclear when Sukma will complete his jail term. His lawyers were not available for comment.

Anwar's corruption trial was adjourned Thursday until Jan. 26, following a new ruling striking all sexual evidence from his court record.

The order was issued after state prosecutors amended charges against Anwar so they would not have to prove accusations that he engaged in homosexual acts or had an affair, in a bid to seek a conviction.

Malaysian opposition leaders have slammed the move and called for the charges to be dropped.

Anwar, 51, was sacked on Sept. 2 and arrested 18 days later after he led a massive rally against Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. He now faces 10 corruption and sodomy charges.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yeltsin draws criticism from Moscow mayor

MOSCOW (AP) — Boris Yeltsin has yet to make an appearance in the Kremlin this year, and Moscow's powerful mayor Friday sharply criticised the Russian president and accused him of failing to fulfil his duties. "Russia, as a presidential republic, should have an active president," Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov said. "We are having problems today." Luzhkov was a Yeltsin supporter for years, but he has begun openly criticising the Russian leader, who has been sidelined by illnesses in recent months and has said almost nothing about the country's economic crisis, which hit five months ago. "If the role of the head of state weakens, this affects the economy and government affairs," Luzhkov said. He made his remarks to Swedish television in advance of a visit to Sweden, and his comments were reported by Russian news agencies. Russia celebrates several holidays at the beginning of the year, and many businesses and government offices are closed for days at a time. Still, Yeltsin had planned Kremlin meetings for Thursday and Friday, but abruptly cancelled them and remained at his Gorky-9 residence outside the capital. Yeltsin remained at his residence Friday and spoke by telephone with the presidents of France and Finland. Yeltsin's aides say the president is in good health and is working daily at Gorky-9, a secluded, wooded retreat. Yeltsin spoke with French President Jacques Chirac to discuss details of his planned visit to France on Jan. 28, the Interfax news agency said. The trip will be Yeltsin's first journey abroad since October, when he cut short a visit to Central Asia because of illness. He was later hospitalised for two weeks with pneumonia. Yeltsin also spoke with Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, and the Russian leader said he planned to visit Finland at some point this year, the Interfax news agency reported. Yeltsin, 67, has insisted he will serve out his term, which lasts until the middle of 2000.

British minister asks for meeting with Germany on nuclear power

LONDON (AFP) — Britain's industry minister has called for an urgent meeting with German Environment Minister Juergen Trittin over Germany's decision to cancel lucrative contracts in nuclear fuel reprocessing, officials said Friday. Trade and Industry Secretary Stephen Byers has asked for the meeting "as a matter of emergency," a spokesman said. The British government is backing protests from the company British Nuclear Fuels at Germany's decision to end the reprocessing contracts as part of its plan to phase out nuclear power. "It is clear that there are binding contracts between U.K. and German companies and letters between U.K. and German governments containing commitments which we expect to be honoured," he said. "We have been in touch both at official and ministerial levels and have made this position clear." Germany's decision has also angered France, where officials predict the loss of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in revenue for their fuel reprocessing industry. A spokesman for British Nuclear Fuels, which operates the Sellafield reprocessing plant in northwest England, confirmed that it was seeking compensation for the breaking of the £1.2 billion worth of contracts. The contracts represent 10 per cent of the Sellafield reprocessing facility's business. About 600 tonnes of German nuclear waste are at Sellafield, with only 56 tonnes so far reprocessed.

Rugova backs meeting of all Kosovo political forces in Vienna

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — Kosovo Albanian moderate political leader Ibrahim Rugova expressed support Friday for a meeting of "all political forces" of Kosovo Albanians as planned by the OSCE in Vienna. "We are working towards the organisation and holding in Vienna of a gathering of all political forces and institutions in Kosovo," Rugova told reporters here. "I am always ready. I am the president of Kosovo and my doors are always open. We are preparing for such a meeting of all political forces and institutions in Kosovo in order to prepare for possible negotiations with Belgrade," Rugova said. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) chairman Kurt Vollebæk said in Vienna Thursday that formation of a "joint platform" of rival Kosovo Albanian group was a priority. He indicated that the OSCE was ready to organise a meeting between rival Kosovo political leaders in Vienna "as soon as possible."

Hand grenade thrown into elementary school

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — A hand grenade was thrown into an elementary school Friday injuring several students, police said. The injuries were not believed to be serious, they said. No one took immediate responsibility for the attack in neighbouring Rawalpindi, some 10 kilometres outside the federal capital of Islamabad. No one has been arrested and so far police say they have no suspects. In recent weeks there have been increasing incidents of violence in Pakistan's populous Punjab province. Last week in a small village in the heart of the Punjab province 16 Shiite Muslims were killed when gunmen walked into a mosque in which they were praying and opened fire. Two weeks ago a bomb shattered a bridge over which Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his family were to cross. Four people were killed, including a police officer who was assisting with the security arrangements for the prime minister. There is no evidence that the attacks are related, but the Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif, brother of the prime minister's, has said that he will step up security. Already additional police patrol large mosques in most cities and towns of Punjab.

Polish theatre director Jerzy Grotowski dies at 65

ROME (AFP) — Polish director Jerzy Grotowski, one of the most important influences on contemporary European theatre, has died at his home in Italy aged 65, the Italian news agency ANSA reported Friday. Grotowski died Thursday at Pontedera, between Pisa and Florence. Pontedera made him an honorary citizen in 1986. His career as a director began in 1957 at the Stary Theatre in the city of Krakow, southern Poland, where he later joined the teaching staff at the national academy of dramatic arts. In 1965 he moved to Wrocław in south-west Poland where he founded his own Institute for Research into Acting Methods and theatre laboratory. Grotowski believed in what he called "poor theatre" — an expression used in the title of one of his books, published in 1968. This laid emphasis on the importance of direct communication between the actor and the audience. Although professionally attached to Wrocław for the next 17 years, he went to London in 1966 to work with the Royal Shakespeare Company. The following year saw him in New York, and from 1968 to 1970 he was professor at the French higher academy of dramatic arts at Aix en Provence. He left Poland in 1982, initially to live in France, before settling in Italy three years later. His many productions included *Fanston* (1963), *Hamlet* (1964) and *Apocalypsis cum Figuris* (1968) for which he received the New York Drama Desk Award.

Cambodian royalist party merges with former resistance partner

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia's royalist FUNCINPEC and its former partner in resistance to strongman Hun Sen, the Soa Sann Party, merged Friday in a bid to strengthen their positions.

The low-key "welcoming ceremony" took place at the FUNCINPEC's party office in Phnom Penh.

"We do this, but it does not mean that we are forming a front to fight anyone," FUNCINPEC chairman Prince Norodom Ranariddh said.

"I have to make it clear to the national and international opinion that we merge in order to reconstruct the royalist and pluralist democratic system," he added, saying the merger was planned "a long time ago."

Prince Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC is now in coalition with Hun Sen's

ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP), after spending years fighting it alongside the forces of the Soa Sann Party and the Khmer Rouge.

The Soa Sann Party is the latest incarnation of the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (PLDP), one of Cambodia's oldest political forces which over the years has espoused nationalism, anti-communism and republicanism.

Soa Sann, who during the 1980s fought Hun Sen's pro-Vietnam regime in alliance with Prince Ranariddh and the Khmer Rouge following Vietnam's invasion in late 1978, retired from politics last year aged 87.

"The reason we are merging with FUNCINPEC is that we want to regroup and strengthen our human resources, particularly the democratic and nationalist

vote," a senior leader of the Soa Sann Party told AFP Thursday.

FUNCINPEC won 45 parliamentary seats in last July's election, against 62 for the CPP.

The election was the first held since the violent collapse of an uneasy power-sharing deal between Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen in July 1997 which resulted from the historic U.N.-brokered polls of 1993.

The PLDP woo 10 seats in the 1993 election but, following a split in 1995, failed to secure any seats in last year's poll. Military conflict in Cambodia has died down with FUNCINPEC and the CPP burying the hatchet and with the collapse of the brutal Khmer Rouge, blamed for the deaths of up to two million Cambodians during the 1970s.

Cambodia plans to cut armed forces, police by third

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — Hoping to attract more than \$1 billion in foreign aid, the Cambodian government announced plans Friday to slash the ranks of the police and military by a more than a third.

The government will present a plan to demobilise 55,000 soldiers and 24,000 police officers over the next five years at a Feb. 25-26 meeting of major donors in Tokyo.

Cambodia's bloated civil service and military has been a major gripe of international donors, who will be asked by the government to give \$1.3 billion in aid over the next three years.

Although Cambodia is enjoying peace for the first time in decades, military spending in recent years has steadily increased with the integration of thousands of Khmer Rouge guerrillas into the army.

The military now stands at 148,000 soldiers and the various police forces have about 64,000 officers, according to government estimates.

Police spokesman Khieu Sopheak said Friday that the payroll for the police and military has become unmanageable. Salaries for November and December have not been paid, and without a substantial increase in revenue, the shortfall is expected to continue.

"These two armed forces spend a lot of money," Khieu Sopheak said. "But now that we are enjoying a peace of almost 100 per cent, we want to shift this money to social welfare."

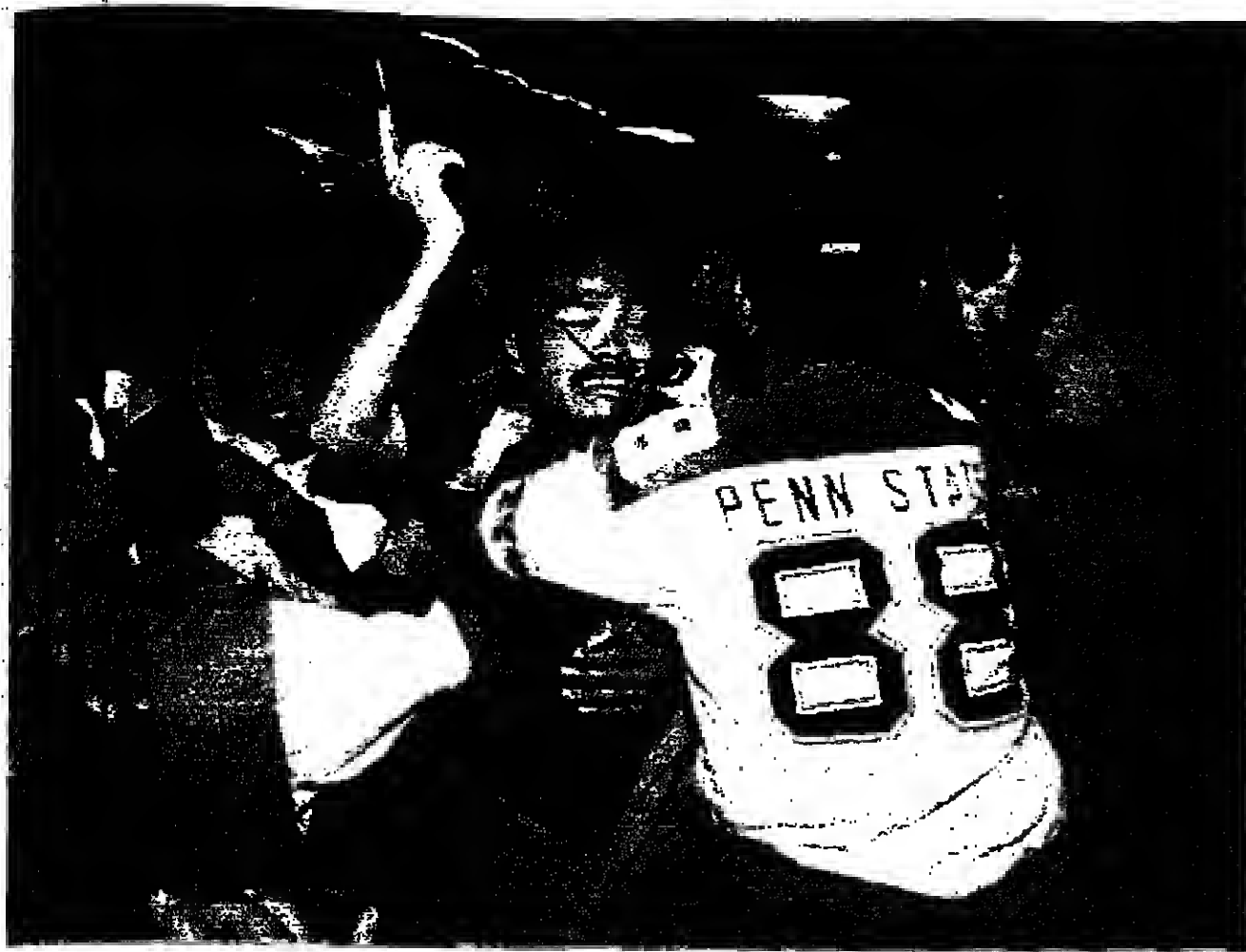
Cutting military spending and increasing budgets for health, education and rural development is a repeated request from donors that have accounted for as much as half of Cambodia's budget in past years.

Assistance was drastically cut in 1997 after Hun Sen seized sole power in a violent coup, but a July election and the formation of a new government have paved the way for a return of desperately needed aid.

Hun Sen will also ask King Norodom Sihanouk to allow him to step down as commander in chief of the armed forces to silence criticism that the military is controlled by the ruling party, Peon Thol said.

The military split along political lines during the coup, and reintegration efforts have hit several snags since Hun Sen struck a coalition deal with his former rival, Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

Hun Sen's army has accused forces loyal to the prince of allowing Khmer Rouge guerrillas to mix with their ranks to boost the strength of the royalist faction, an accusation denied by Ranariddh's generals.



A Malaysian plainclothes policeman pulls his pistol and fires above the heads of protesters who attacked him and a colleague in the capital. The protesters were attending an anti-government demonstration in support of sacked former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. The policemen were attacked by the crowd and both fired one shot before running away (Reuters photo)

DC police lead nation in shootings

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The District of Columbia's Metropolitan Police

Department have shot and killed more people per resident in the 1990s than any other large American city police force.

An eight month investigation by The Washington Post released today found that many of the shootings by Washington police officers were acts of courage and even heroism.

However, internal police files and court records reveal a pattern of reckless and indiscriminate gunplay by officers sent into the streets with inadequate training and little oversight.

Washington's officers fire their weapons at more than double the rate of police in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago or Miami. Deaths and injuries in those shooting cases have resulted in nearly \$8 million in court settlements

and judgements against the District in the last six months alone.

Executive Assistant Chief of Police Terrance W. Gainer, who became the department's second in command in May, told the Post: "We shoot too often, and we shoot too much when we do shoot."

The shootings involve a small proportion of the District's 3,550 officers. But the details of individual cases can be chilling even to police veterans: An off-duty police officer out walking his dog in August 1995 fired 11 times while trying to stop an unarmed motorist who had hit a utility pole and left the scene of the accident.

An off-duty police officer fishing in May 1995 shot an unarmed man three times after arguing with him on the banks of Rock Creek.

In August, an officer ended a police chase of an irrational truck driver who had rammed

several cars by firing 38 times into the truck's cab, killing the unarmed driver.

The extent and pattern of police shootings have been obscured from public view. Police officials investigate incidents in secret, producing reports that become public only when a judge intercedes.

In a small hearing room closed to the public, nine of every 10 shootings are ruled justified by department officials who read the reports filed by investigating officers but generally bear no witness.

The state of police shootings in the District this decade is closely tied to the training and supervision of officers and the way the department investigates cases and holds officers accountable, records and interviews show.

The Post investigation found police shootings began to rise at the beginning of the decade with a huge infusion of new, ill-prepared recruits and

the adoption of the light-trigger, highly advanced Glock 9mm handgun as the department's service weapon.

By the mid-1990s, shootings by officers had doubled to record levels even as a succession of police administrations failed to accurately track shooting patterns or correct acknowledged deficiencies in firearm skills. Among the findings of The Post's investigation: — In the last five years, D.C. officers shot and killed 57 people three more than police reported in Chicago, which has three times the police force and five times the population.

— During that period, D.C. officers were involved in 640 shooting incidents 40 more than the Los Angeles Police Department, which has more than double the officers and serves six times the population. Since 1990, Washington police have shot and killed 85 people.

But the head of the Bosnia mission of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said Kalinic did not have sufficient support in the parliament of the Serb republic, one of post-war Bosnia's two autonomous entities.

"He does not have anything like enough votes to be approved by the RS (Bosnian Serb) national assembly," OSCE Ambassador Robert Barry told reporters Saturday evening.

Barry and the Office of the High Representative (OHR), which oversees civilian peace efforts, also said a government headed by Kalinic would not receive Western support.

Saying that the nomination of Kalinic was "not serious," Barry added: "The next step that is supposed to be done is for President

Protests flare in Kuala Lumpur as Anwar affair refuses to go away

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Protests flared Sunday, with police spraying demonstrators with water cannon in the Malaysian capital as continuing anger at the ousting of Deputy Premier Anwar Ibrahim cast a pall over the APEC meetings here.

Sporadic demonstrations erupted throughout the morning, concentrated around the Petronas twin towers, the world's tallest building and a proud symbol of Malaysia.

The crowd was seen carrying banners calling for "reformasi," or reforms, the same call which toppled veteran Indonesian leader Suharto in May.

"This is the beginning of our struggle for Malaysians to be on the international stage, struggling for democracy, human rights and against imperialism," Malaysian opposition coalition leader Tian Chua said.

It was the second day in a series of protests after hundreds of people tried late Saturday to march on the hotel where U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was staying.

Some of them were brandishing banners calling on U.S. President Bill Clinton to intervene in the country's

worst political crisis in decades.

If Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad had hoped to quell the protests over the ousting of his long-time protégé more than two months ago, weekly demonstrations at home, and international concern have ensured that it has stayed firmly in the spotlight.

Once one of the most respected of a new, younger vanguard of Southeast Asian leaders, Anwar, 51, now languishes in a Kuala Lumpur jail facing 10 charges of corruption and sodomy — all of which he has denied.

His fall from grace came after months of discord over economic policy with Mahathir, who had groomed him to be his successor to lead the country of more than 20 million people.

Supporters have held weekly protests calling on Mahathir, 73, to end his 17-year rule, and have seen the arrival of world leaders for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum as a chance to press home their cause.

The scandal overshadowed the Commonwealth Games earlier this year, the

first to be hosted by an Asian country, and has now cast a shadow over the APEC meetings.

Mahathir, facing a barrage of criticism and press questions, has sharply told outsiders the Anwar case is an internal matter.

Saturday, he told the official Bernama news agency it would be "unfortunate" if some APEC members tried to politicise the case, saying it would hold up debate on vital economic issues.

"Everyone of us have got political problems. So there's no one who is not guilty of some political abuse," he said.

Anwar has alleged he is the victim of a conspiracy to bring him down, and has refused to be silenced, often launching sharp tirades against Mahathir during court recesses.

And despite a court order banning any statements outside the trial on Anwar's innocence or guilt, Mahathir defended the sacking of his deputy as the morally right thing to do in a live broadcast with Cable News Network last week.

But foreign leaders have disagreed. Albright had planned to make a strong show of support for Anwar by meeting

his wife Azizah, who has taken over the reform movement launched in the wake of her husband's sacking.

However, U.S. sources announced Sunday that Albright was due to head home as a showdown between Iraq and the United States looms.

Azizah lunched Saturday with Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy and Trade Minister Sergio Marchi at a hotel as three truckloads of police gathered outside.

"Clearly, we expressed concerns ... about the treatment of Anwar and other people who have been politically detained," Axworthy said afterwards.

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien has refused to meet with Mahathir during his stay here, as did U.S. President Bill Clinton before he cancelled his trip, in a snub which the Malaysian premier has tried to brush aside.

But Albright said before arriving here she wanted to meet Azizah to "signal the fact that we are very concerned about what is happening to Anwar, who ... has made very clear his own dedication to democracy and a market economy."

West hopes Bosnian Serbs will reject PM nomination

SARAJEVO (R) — The international community remained hopeful Sunday that a Western-leaning government could be formed in Bosnia's Serb half, despite the surprise nomination of a

barline nationalist as new prime minister.

Newly elected Bosnian Serb President Nikola Poplasen defied Western pressure Saturday by nominating Dragan Kalinic of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS), founded by war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic in 1990.

But the head of the Bosnia mission of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said Kalinic did not have sufficient support in the parliament of the Serb republic, one of post-war Bosnia's two autonomous entities.

"He does not have anything like enough votes to be approved by the RS (Bosnian Serb) national assembly," OSCE Ambassador Robert Barry told reporters Saturday evening.

Barry and the Office of the High Representative (OHR), which oversees civilian peace efforts, also said a government headed by Kalinic would not receive Western support.

Saying that the nomination of Kalinic was "not serious," Barry added: "The next step that is supposed to be done is for President

Poplasen to nominate somebody else."

Barry said he believed that only incumbent Prime Minister Milorad Dodik of the Western-sponsored Sloga (Unity) coalition could win majority support in the entity's parliament as well as international backing.

OHR spokeswoman Alexandra Stiglitz also predicted that Kalinic would be rejected by Sloga and by parties representing mainly Muslims and Croats who fled to what is now Bosnia's Muslim-Croat federation during the 1992-1995 war.

"We have reason to believe that he will be voted down by Sloga together with the federation parties and that Dodik will again become prime minister," she told Reuters Sunday.

The Serb republic's parliament may meet to vote on the candidacy of Kalinic on Nov. 25.

An adviser to Alija Izetbegovic, the Muslim member of Bosnia's inter-ethnic presidency, dismissed the nomination as a "waste of time" as Kalinic would not be approved by parliament.

Barry said Poplasen's reasons for nominating Kalinic may be to fulfil "some obligation" to the SDS, the entity's single largest party, without expecting him to be elected. "But let's get this

over with fast and get it behind us," he said.

Since ousting bardiens in January, Dodik's government has received hundreds of millions of dollars in international aid.

It is made up of the three-member Sloga coalition but relies on support from Muslim and Croat deputies.

Both Sloga and the bardiens coalition of the SDS and the Radicals have just over 30 deputies in the 83-seat parliament.

Barry said he had met with the parliament's speaker, Sloga's Petar Djokic, earlier Saturday and that it was clear the coalition was "solidly" behind Dodik. "Their votes will not go to Kalinic and an SDS government," he said.

Poplasen, elected in September, announced his decision only hours after the OHR ordered his Yugoslav patron, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Vojislav Seselj, to leave Bosnia in an operation supported by NATO-led peace-keeping troops.

Seselj, an ultra-nationalist, had been attending a meeting with Poplasen in Banja Luka, the Bosnian Serb capital.

"Mr. Seselj has made a number of negative contributions to the politics of Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina," Barry said. "He is not welcome in this country."

Serbia's Milutinovic calls for direct talks on Kosovo

BELGRADE (R) — Serbia Sunday offered to hold direct talks on the conflict in its separatist Kosovo province, inviting U.S., Chinese, Russian and European Union representatives to attend negotiations proposed for next week.

It did not mention who was invited from the ethnic Albanian majority in Kosovo, where guerrillas from the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) have battled Serbian security forces for more than seven months this year.

"Serbian President Milan Milutinovic addressed an invitation for the continuation of dialogue on the political solution of the problems of Kosovo and Metohija for Wednesday, Nov. 18, in Pristina," the official Tanjug news agency said, quoting a statement from Milutinovic's office.

Serbia has previously offered talks on Kosovo, but ethnic Albanian leaders have refused, saying Belgrade must first withdraw its forces, whose campaign against the KLA drove more than a quarter of a million people in Kosovo from their homes.

Belgrade pulled out much of its forces last month under a deal struck between U.S. Balkans envoy Richard Holbrooke and Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic after NATO threatened air and missile strikes.

Since then U.S. mediator Christopher Hill has been shuttling between Kosovo and Belgrade trying to broker a political settlement and secure an increasingly shaky ceasefire.

A draft settlement drawn up to try to take account of the positions of both sides has come under fire from many of Kosovo's divided ethnic Albanian leaders, who say it does not offer sufficient guarantees for genuine self-rule.

Belgrade has also responded coolly to the draft and the invitation to direct talks made clear it wanted more control over what are currently U.S.-led peace negotiations.

The international community has ruled out independence for Kosovo but Belgrade fears a vague political deal could let in independence through the back door.

"President Milutinovic assessed that all conditions have been met for a direct meeting and talks on finding a political solution for problems in Kosovo," the statement said.

"Because of the importance and essence of the talks the president will personally chair the meeting and he has decided to invite as guests ambassador Christopher Hill, special U.S. representative for Yugoslavia, the ambassador of the Russian Federation and of China as well as the Ambassador of Austria as the Chairman of the European Union," Tanjug said.

Indian PM terms fruitless peace talks with Pakistan a positive sign

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee Sunday said recent fruitless talks with arch-rival Pakistan were nevertheless a "positive" step despite the lack of progress on Kashmir.

Vajpayee told reporters here that the week-long dialogue which ended Friday, widely seen as a failed exercise, was a "positive sign" towards settling disputes apart from the thorny issue of Kashmir.

He recalled the three Indo-Pakistani wars — two of them sparked by the disputed Himalayan state — and said such contentious issues would have to be resolved bilaterally.

Pakistan wants a third party to intervene in talks on Kashmir.

"There is no question of any

third-party mediation to solve these problems and negotiation is the only way out. India is ready to wait for this," Vajpayee said in an oblique reference to Kashmir.

"It's not proper to say that there is no progress," he said of last week's dialogue in New Delhi.

The talks failed to achieve any significant progress on any of the half-dozen issues discussed in New Delhi — the second round of negotiations since India and Pakistan resumed their bilateral dialogue in Islamabad last month after a one-year freeze.

The crucial issue of Kashmir, discussed separately in Islamabad, still managed to overshadow — and in several cases suffocate — the ques-

tions discussed in Delhi, which included several territorial disputes as well as trade, terrorism and drug-trafficking.

Islamabad wants outside mediation on Kashmir or a United Nations-backed referendum to determine the future of the Himalayan province, divided between India and Pakistan and claimed by both.

India vehemently opposes any third-party involvement, arguing Kashmir is an "integral" part of its territory.

"The series of talks as a whole has not been positive," Pakistani government spokesman Tariq Alfat said last week.

"We had come with high hopes which remain unfulfilled. We did not find any flexibility," said Alfat, who argued

that the failure strengthened the case for third-party intervention.

Indian government spokesman Vivek Kataria was more philosophical, underlining the "step-by-step" nature of the dialogue.

"Some beginning has to be made to stop this vicious cycle of mistrust from continuing," Kataria said, denying the Pakistani charges of inflexibility.

"From our side every step has been made to make the talks a success and that effort will continue in a serious and constructive manner."

Simmering tensions between the two bitter rivals grew sharply in May when India and Pakistan conducted tit-for-tat nuclear tests.

Voting begins for Okinawa governorship

TOKYO (AFP) — Residents in Okinawa went to the polls Sunday to elect a governor of the southern Japanese island in a test of public support for a floating U.S. military heliport.

The governorship poll is widely seen as a man-to-man fight between incumbent governor Masahide Ota and Keiichi Inamine who is backed by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Ota, 73, who receives support from opposition parties, totally opposes construction of the proposed floating U.S. military helicopter pad anywhere on the island.

"This election will clearly show the citizen's opinions and I will not resent any result," Ota said as he cast his own vote.

The 65-year-old LDP

candidate says it can be built in the northern part of the island for use by both the U.S. military and Japanese civil aviation, claiming that such a project would bring benefits to the island.

"I can feel the change of public opinions and I have realised the citizen's desire for the new age," Inamine said.

Ota proposed to use sites of U.S. bases for industrial development, while his opponent backed by Okinawan business leaders pledged to win a larger slice of the national budget for the island.

Polling stations will be closed at 8:00 p.m. (1100 GMT). "The outcome of the election is expected late Sunday or early Monday," an election official said.

Okinawa's election com-

mittee said 49 per cent of registered voters had cast their votes by 4:00 p.m. (0700 GMT), a slightly lower turnout so far compared to that of the previous governorship poll four years ago.

Building the helicopter facility was a precondition for the closure of the Futenma air base for the U.S. Marine Corps in five to seven years in an effort to alleviate the burden on Okinawa.

The agreement was reached after the 1995 rape of a 12-year-old girl by three American servicemen which unleashed a tide of anger in the island, which hosts 27,000 of the 47,000 U.S. troops in Japan.

The planned heliport, measuring 1,600 metres wide and 500 metres long, would have been constructed

on a structure above the sea at a cost of 150-to-200 billion yen (\$1.3-to-1.7 billion).

Despite the 1996 agreement between the two countries to reduce U.S. landholdings in Okinawa, the government failed to come up with fresh proposals to ease the military presence as the heliport scheme stalled.

In a newspaper poll last week the heliport plan was rejected by 65 per cent of local residents.

Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi said last week the central government would reconsider the plan to build the sea-based heliport, but insisted that an alternative facility should still be on the island.

Obuchi said it would be "impossible" to build the heliport outside the island

but "I think it is very important to gain understanding and cooperation from people in Okinawa."

"In that sense, I will closely watch the outcome of the election," he added.

Citizens in the southern-most prefecture are essentially asked to choose between U.S. facility relocation and economic improvement.

Okinawa accounts for 0.6 per cent of Japan's total land, but hosts about three quarters of U.S. military facilities in the country.

The prefecture, which is largely dependent on tourism, was hit by a record-high unemployment rate in September since Japan regained governance of the prefecture in 1972.

Its per capita income is the lowest among 47 prefectures.

Anti-corruption unit accuses S. African minister over play

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — An anti-corruption unit has accused South African Health Minister Nkosuzuma Zuma of being "negligent" and "reckless" in commissioning an anti-AIDS play that led to the loss of 10 million rand (\$1.8 million), the Johannesburg Sunday Times said.

Judge William Heath, who heads the unit, said in a 144-page report that Zuma should be made to repay the money, which was donated by the European Union, the newspaper reported.

The Health Special Investigating Unit — set up by President Nelson Mandela to tackle corruption in government — said Zuma "negligently or recklessly" omitted to stipulate a spending limit on the play "Sarafina 2".

It said Zuma failed to take any "reasonable, necessary and/or adequate steps to determine and/or to ensure whether adequate funding was available for the production."

He also allegedly failed to take reasonable steps to ensure the cost of the production fell within the bounds of financing agreements between the Health Department and the EU.

The production was cancelled amid controversy in 1996.

The government later seized vehicles and equipment from the play's producers.

Heath's allegations have led to tension between his unit and the government, with Deputy President Thabo Mbeki saying the government would fight any charges against Zuma.

Mbeki's legal adviser, Mofokeng Gumbi said the government was confident Zuma had not misappropriated any government funds.

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No room for error

THE ENTIRE world, and particularly the Arab countries, breathed a collective sigh of relief after the announcement by U.S. President Bill Clinton that American and British strikes against Iraq would not be carried out following Iraq's decision to resume cooperation with the U.N. weapons inspectors. In what has now become a regular, almost expected, occurrence in the Middle East, Iraq and the U.S. went to the brink, only to stand down at the 11th hour. The conclusion to this most recent standoff, and the fact that military action was not used, is certainly welcome.

The situation, however, is far from over, and has returned to a state that is all too familiar. The U.S. and Britain will continue their wait, fingers on the trigger, for the next time Iraq decides to interrupt the work of the UNSCOM team. Iraqis will wake up, no longer under imminent threat of attack, but still facing the crippling U.N. sanctions, now in their eighth year. In the meantime, countries normally sympathetic to the Iraqi cause are beginning to waver in their support in light of the continued crises. The situation, for those working towards an end to the sanctions and the reintegration of Iraq into the world community, remains bleak.

In addition to making no mention of a timetable or schedule for lifting the sanctions, at least partially, Clinton in his speech also offered the clearest indication yet that the American administration is intent on toppling Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. The American president outlined a destabilisation plan to this effect which includes strengthening opposition groups and radio broadcasts into Iraq. The legality of this plan and U.S. arguments that ousting President Hussein's regime would be the best thing for the Iraqi people are irrelevant, as far as the work of UNSCOM and the accompanying sanctions are concerned. The sanctions have been tied to disarming Iraq, not a political change in the country. Introducing this plan into the equation at this point is grossly unfair to the Iraqi people.

Although this crisis is over, the difficult part remains: getting the sanctions lifted. To do this, Iraq has no choice but to cooperate fully with the UNSCOM staff. And the U.S. and Britain should not change the nature of the inspections by introducing this new political dimension. The U.S. and the U.K., by announcing that they reserve the "right" to carry out military action without consulting the Security Council, have made their break with the U.N. Iraq must do everything it can to stay within the United Nations' framework.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek advised the Palestinians to continue the peace process with Israel since it is the only option they have. The Palestinian people have nothing to lose, but many things to gain, said Fanek. The only concession the Palestinians could have made was to recognise Israel which has already happened. Israel wants the Palestinians to amend the section in the Palestinian Charter calling for the destruction of Israel, but the amendment is circumstantial, because the Palestinians can always rewrite another section in case the peace process collapses, said Fanek. The peace treaty demands that the PNA detain all Islamist activists, however prisoners will not be locked forever, added Fanek. In return the Palestinians want a state, a capital, and water which look unlikely to be achieved while the hard-liner Benjamin Netanyahu remains Israeli prime minister, but Netanyahu is not immortal and his resistance to the forces of history will not last for ever, Fanek pointed out.

Al Dustour's Jihad Momani commented on the letter sent by the opposition parties to Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh which included issues for discussion between the two sides. He said the letter was odd, because it contained demands and results before talks have even begun, which means there is disagreement between the government and the opposition before the talks start, and the writer charged that the opposition had failed to include issues of true concern to the Jordanian people. Momani demanded that the unrealistic calls for suspending relations with Israel and opposing the Wye River memorandum should stop. The writer charged that it might be logical to minimise relations with the Jewish state, but still this is not what Jordan really suffers from. Unemployment, corruption and crime did not result from peace, said Momani, who suggested that the opposition should discuss these issues with the government as well as poverty and the huge number of Arab immigrants in the country.

Economic Review

Dr. Yusuf Mansur

A leader and a vision

IT IS WIDELY recognised that the main mission of a true leader is to create a vision for his people. Nowhere in the political or economic arena has a leader's vision been more far-reaching, time enduring and correct, than in the case of Jordan. The King's vision, this single aspect of Jordan's governance, has not only been its saviour in times of crises, but also its most prized asset.

Jordan has always been a nation in the middle, geographically located in the hub of change, turmoil and conflict. Its leader, however, has been the voice of wisdom, tolerance and mediation. His words, deeds, commitments and sacrifice have brought Jordan respect among the nations of the world.

Since Jordan became independent in 1946, the Israeli-Arab conflict and the wars that have raked the region over the last fifty years have decidedly influenced its history and development. Jordan's leader accepted the influx of refugees in 1948 and gave endless empathy to the suffering of the displaced. He later withstood the loss of the West Bank and the creation of more misery and degradation, easing the hardships of many and uniting a people. Later he accepted, with all its adverse consequences, the

repatriation of almost one-tenth of Jordan's population from neighbouring Arab states within days of the aftermath of the Gulf conflict, a conflict he had so ardently tried to resolve through peaceful means. And when brother turned against brother he dignified Jordan's position by not joining the aggressors on either side. He then came back to make peace in Madrid and sign a peace accord that helped pave the way to less misery.

In his commitment to his Arab brethren and Arab unity he helped heal feuds, brought together the estranged and established long-lasting ties of mutual respect and trust. In the world beyond the Middle East, he is widely respected for his character and integrity. His stature as a world statesman is unparalleled, giving impetus to all Jordanians to grow and catch up with the gracious image of their leader at home and abroad.

In peace as in war, the arrogance of hate and the abuse of might have pained him. He shared in the grief of those suffering in Jordan and across the river, kneeled before the tears of the children; and stood staunchly by the right of every Jordanian to be safe within her borders. He left his hospital bed while still fighting disease to fight for

peace, stability and justice, and, yes, he made peace with the strength of his inner vision.

At home, beyond the political spectrum and looking specifically at the domestic economy, Jordan has a market-directed, private-property oriented, profit seeking system. In comparison with other countries in the region, Jordan is a more open economy and its bureaucracy and government provides fewer obstacles to the workings of the market. Further, the quality of life in Jordan is higher than most countries in the region and continues to rise. Its people enjoy political participation, freedom of speech and democracy. The government spends more on education as a percentage of GDP than any in the region: the rate of illiteracy has fallen to 14% and the rate of education among males and females is almost equal. The physical infrastructure is among the best in the region; and its provision of public health services is better than average helping raise life expectancy to 70 years among men with women expected to live even longer. To the man who helped facilitate all that in an atmosphere of political and economic stability, to this great man of all seasons we say, "Happy birthday."

Wye River agreement bias

By Pascal B. Karmy

NOTWITHSTANDING THE Wye River interim agreement of October 23, 1998 Netanyahu is not deterred. He continues to procrastinate and prevaricate and throw artificial obstacles in the way of its implementation. He is behaving as if no agreement was reached. He persists in allowing settlements to be built, the building of fixed houses in Hebron, be ordered tenders to be published for building entirely new settlements in Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) and allows the Jews to settle in Ras Al Amoud in the heart of the purely Arab quarter of east Jerusalem.

Let us now shortly analyse the Wye River agreement. It is in effect divided into two parts. The first part deals mainly with redeployment of the Israeli army by 13.1 per cent and then 14.2 per cent of the West Bank territory, the guarantee of two corridors of safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank, Israeli commitment to discuss third phase troop withdrawal, the opening of a Palestine airport and seaport in Gaza and the release of 750 Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails. All in all the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) will control wholly or partially less than 50 per cent of the West Bank territory. The second part which constitutes in fact the largest part of the agreement deals with the security plan entirely in favour of Israel.

One of the fundamental changes produced by the agreement is the change of the equation "land for peace" into "land for security" of Israel. Indeed the atmosphere of security seems to have prevailed in the Wye River negotiations and thus almost three quarters of the agreement deal with security. There are many loopholes and some provisions need clarification. The security part aims at the opposers to the Oslo accords such as Hamas and others, and it is therefore feared that combating the opposers by the PNA will lead to the persecution of the critics of the agreement and to the consequent elimination of democracy and political pluralism and lastly to the dictatorship of the PNA.

In effect there is almost nothing new in the agreement as far as Israeli troop redeployments are concerned. The redeployment of 13.1 per cent was

already part of the American initiative made at the beginning of this year while the second and third phases of troop redeployment have been part of the previous agreements of May 4, 1994, September 28, 1995 and January 17, 1997 (Hebron accord). What is new here is that redeployments are conditional upon the fulfilment by the PNA of strict security provisions. It should

'One of the fundamental changes produced by the agreement is the change of the equation "land for peace" into "land for security"'

be remembered that the original Oslo accord of 1993 laid down general principles which needed interpretation in a series of subsequent agreements, hence the Wye interim agreement. What distinguishes this agreement from the previous ones is that it is heavily in favour of Israel. It dealt with the strict security of Israel, but ignored the security of the Palestinians: their treatment by Israeli soldiers, aggressions by the settlers, and demolition of houses. This of course is the result of the imbalance of power between Israel and the PNA, the former enjoying formidable lever vis-a-vis the latter.

The security plan is the cornerstone of the Wye interim agreement. It confers upon Netanyahu the means to engage the PNA and to require it to ensure the security of not only the state of Israel but also that of every Jewish citizen. The broadly phrased Wye security provisions enable Netanyahu to always claim that the PNA has failed to fulfil its security commitments and that is what we are presently witnessing.

The Wye River interim agreement which has resolved comparatively

minor matters took nine days of intensive negotiations and under the supervision and urging of President Clinton. How long will it take to resolve much greater problems such as Jerusalem, the refugees, settlements, borders and water? It is very doubtful that those substantial problems would be resolved before May 4, 1999. In the meantime, Israel would change the facts on the ground: Judaisation of Jerusalem, building of more settlements, demolition of more houses, and confiscation of Palestinian lands, all of which are unilateral actions which preempt and prejudice the final status negotiations on the above-mentioned problems.

However, we can discern two marginal advantages in favour of the Palestinians as a result of the Wye negotiations. There was an understanding that the United States will grant economic assistance to the Palestinians and that Israel should desist from carrying out unilateral actions. It is expected that the U.S. will issue a statement to this effect. The second advantage is that the close negotiations and contact with the Americans contributed to the understanding by the U.S. of Palestinians' demands. The credibility and conduct of the Palestinians have created a good impression in Washington. The forthcoming visit by President Clinton to the PNA region will constitute a great event and perhaps a step forward towards the recognition of the Palestine state.

In conclusion, it is appropriate to quote a few words from the editorial of the Washington Post of October 24, 1998: "Israel's security will continue to rest first on deterrence and counter-terrorism. But if the Israelis are wise and fortunate, their security will increasingly come to reflect an easing of tensions with their Palestinian neighbours. An easing can be achieved only by accommodating the Palestinians' legitimate statehood ambitions... The Palestinians deserve a state and security no less than many other peoples."

The writer was an advocate in Palestine in 1944 and, for many years, legal officer at UNRWA headquarters in Beirut and Vienna.

Belated greetings

To the editor:

ON BEHALF of all Jordanian Circassians in the United States, I would like to extend to the great father, brother, and leader, His Majesty King Hussein, our best wishes on his birthday, praying to Allah that he may return to our Jordanian family in the best of health and the strongest of wills to continue the march he started more than forty years ago. God bless you Your Majesty and with our lives we shall always shield you.

Bassam Zohair Alasker
 Los Angeles CA, U.S.

To the editor:

WE SEND our best wishes to His Majesty for a long, happy, healthy life ahead. We hope he will return to Jordan and his family safely. God bless him and keep him.

Adel and Nancy Amarin and Children
 California, U.S.

Promoting Jordan

To the editor:

I AM currently studying communication arts at the Lebanese American University (formerly BUC), and every day I am increasingly shocked that people I meet have never heard of Petra. People come from the most distant parts of the world to see this site, and ironically many people in Lebanon do not even know what Petra is (a guy once asked me if I "lived in this Petra place").

As a Jordanian I felt that I owe it to my country to create some awareness around me. I got some pictures of Petra and I am showing them around, and many people have shown an interest in visiting Jordan.

Unfortunately my role in promoting Jordan among individuals comes to an end at this point. Now comes the role of our government — namely the Ministry of Tourism — to promote our national treasure, Petra, on a larger scale.

Jomana Wael Karadsheh
 Lau, Beirut, Lebanon
 Jomanak@hotmail.com

Palestinian-U.S. relationship under review

By George S. Hishmeh

ON TWO recent occasions, the Clinton administration has committed itself, once privately and the other publicly, to review the nature of the U.S.-Palestinian relationship, now expanding by leaps and bounds since the signing last month of the Wye Memorandum outlining a protracted second Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian territory within three months.

Much to the chagrin of pro-Israeli groups here and some within the Israeli establishment, Likud or Labour, this growing relationship has allowed the United States to almost arbitrate every Palestinian-Israeli squabble. In fact, some American Jewish groups are blaming the intransigent policies of the Israeli government of Benjamin Netanyahu for allowing the American side to virtually negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians at times of conflict.

Despite this seemingly rosy picture, the Palestinians have little to show for it despite the outward signs of support enunciated here and there by U.S. officials as evidenced last week in their defence of the Palestinian Authority after it had been subjected to baseless Israeli charges.

Where the Americans have been remiss with regard to the Palestinian Authority is in their failure to rectify U.S. laws governing this relationship, as punctuated by a Republican-dominated Congress that is very supportive of Israel. The shenanigans of outgoing House Speaker Newt Gingrich last summer during his visit to Jerusalem are still vivid to many a Palestinian official.

But the one-sidedness of the U.S. position was first institutionalised in the Palestinian-Israeli sphere by then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger after he promised in September 1975 in a memorandum to the Israelis that the United States would not meet or negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) until and unless the PLO recognised Israel's right to exist and accepted U.N. resolutions 242 and 338.

Kissinger's action had a ripple effect felt to this very day. Although unsolicited by the executive branch, writes Clyde Mark of the Congressional Research Service at the Library of Congress, Congress in 1984 codified Kissinger's promises, and added another condition, that the PLO must renounce terrorism.

In 1988, Arafat met the three conditions, and on December 16 of that year, the United States and the PLO began public, direct meetings in Tunis.

But in 1990, Congress passed the PLO Commitments Compliance Act (PLOCCA) that called for three executive branch reports to Congress which Mark identified as: first, to solicit information from the PLO about a series of armed incursions into Israel and report the PLO response to Congress; second, to report to Congress on the PLO meeting its commitments and on PLO anti-Israeli actions; and third, to submit quarterly reports on the PLO's role in terrorism, the status of the PLO Covenant, PLO action on the Arab boycott, and other PLO politics and issues.

But five months after PLOCCA became law in June 1990, the quarterly reports by

the administration were stopped when President George Bush ended the dialogue with the PLO because the Palestinian organisation refused to condemn a terrorist attack on Tel Aviv. However, the dialogue was resumed one day after the PLO and Israel announced their Oslo agreement in September 1993.

When the United States hosted a donors conference in Washington shortly thereafter to support the PLO, the Clinton administration was not able to provide aid to the Palestinians until sections of the U.S. law prohibiting or limiting aid to the PLO were waived or repealed.

As a result, Congress passed the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act of 1993 (MEPFA) granting the U.S. president waiver authority over sections of the law that restricted U.S.-PLO contact.

"There is no comparable section of U.S. law where Israeli commitment compliance is monitored," Mark points out, a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs at the Library of Congress.

To this day, the U.S. administration has to seek an extension of MEPFA before it can undertake any meaningful contacts with the Palestinians. In fact, the small liaison office established by the PLO and later by the PA here, is affected by this legislation — a number of times it was compelled to close down or maintain a low profile due to some procedural or policy conflict between the administration and Congress. Whatever, all the State Department reports submitted in fulfilment of the legislation have certified that the PLO or the PA is complying with its commitments.

"Some members of Congress and members of groups supporting Israeli believe," according to Mark, "that the PLOCCA/MEPFA reports are a 'white-wash' and that the PLO should be held to a more exacting standard of compliance."

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has promised to look into ways of rectifying the legislation at a recent meeting with Arab American and American Jewish leaders who were asked to rally in support of the Wye accord. The administration must "practise what it preaches," Khalil Jahshan, president of the National Association of Arab Americans, reminded her when urged to form "a constituency for peace" with fellow American Jews.

Again, Aaron Miller, deputy Middle East peace coordinator, agreed at a talk last week at the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine that the administration would look into this issue when told that the Palestinian Governor of Ramallah, Mustapha Issa, better known as Abu Firas, who was invited to take part in a U.S. lecture tour, was inexplicably denied a U.S. visa, some think because of his prominent PLO activities in the past.

But some Arab-American leaders here doubt the administration is sincere about waging a battle with Congress since no spade work has been undertaken to date. Rather they believe it should be up to the Palestinian Authority to exert sufficient pressure on President Clinton, who is due in the West Bank next December, to review this anachronistic legislation that is harmful to the budding U.S.-Palestinian relationship.

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CBJ annual report details Jordan's '97 economic, financial performance

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Economic growth in Jordan in 1997 fell below expectations — a leading cause of the "worsening" public finance performance, the Central Bank of Jordan's annual report indicated Sunday.

The report said the gross domestic product (GDP), based on fixed price, amounted to 2.2 per cent in 1997 compared with a targeted growth rate of 5.0 per cent.

The growth in 1997 was enhanced by the market activity in the "transport, storage, communications and manufacturing sectors," the 194-page report, made available to the Jordan Times, said.

The performance of other sectors in the past year was marked by moderate growth with the exception of the construction and agriculture sectors.

Despite these figures, there was a relative improvement in the rate of economic growth and performance of public finance during the previous year compared to the 1996 figure.

The report showed that the inflation rate declined to 3.0 per cent in 1997 against 6.5 per cent in the previous year, due to the "prudent aggregate demand policy...exchange rate stability of the dinar and decline in prices of imports this year."

As a result, the ratio of the budget deficit, excluding grants, to GDP rose to 6.8 per cent against the economic adjustment programme target of 3.1 per cent and 7.7 per cent in 1996, the report added.

It said the deficit amounted to JD339 million in 1997, a decrease of JD30.8 million below 1996.

"The narrowing of the public deficit (excluding grants) in 1997 is attributed to the decrease in public expenditures by 2.5 per cent compared with their level in 1996," the report said.

"The slow-paced growth of public expenditures reflects primarily continued efforts to control food subsidies on the current expenditure side which fell to half its level of the previous year," it added.

The report said that per

capita income grew by 1.4 per cent to reach JD1,087 (\$1,533) a year. However, per capita income at constant prices declined by 1.3 per cent compared to a decline of 2.7 per cent in 1996.

On the monetary and banking front, the report said that among the features that characterised the economic growth in 1997 was the increase in the foreign reserves, \$1.69 billion, enough to cover the Kingdom's imports for a period of up to 5.4 months compared to 2.1 months in 1996.

Interest rates on dinar certificates of deposit (CDs) issued by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) dropped gradually since the middle of 1997 with the drop amounting to three per cent by the end of the year on 3 and 6 months CDs to reach 6.25 per cent and 6.50 per cent respectively compared with their level at the end of 1996.

Domestic liquidity in 1997 grew by 7.8 per cent against a slight growth of 0.3 per cent in the previous year, which played a major role in activating the

demand for goods and services.

While internal public debt dropped in 1997 to JD914.2 million, or 9.1 per cent below the 1996 level, external debt dropped by JD142.2 million, or 3.0 per cent below its 1996 level, to reach JD4,58 billion.

The report said trading at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) rose in 1997 by JD106.7 million, or 42.9 per cent, to reach JD355.3 million. The share price index in the AFM's organised market rose by 10.2 per cent, against a decline of 3.6 per cent in 1996.

For the first time in eight years, the current account recorded a surplus of JD20.8 million against a deficit of JD157.4 million in 1996.

According to the CBJ figures, the trade balance deficit recorded in 1997 amounted to JD148.3 million, or 8.5 per cent below its 1996 level to reach JD160.5 million, or 32.1 per cent of GDP, resulting from a decline in imports by JD135.1 million, or 4.4 per cent below their 1996 level, to reach JD2906.5 million.

Israeli consumer prices soar, ministers roar

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli consumer prices soared three per cent in October, their highest monthly jump in 13 years, pushed by a drastic fall in the value of the national currency against the dollar.

The big jump in the consumer price index was announced Sunday, the same day the Bank of Israel hiked its discount rate by two per cent.

It was the second such increase the bank has ordered in two weeks in a bid to rein in inflation and has sparked angry criticism of the government's economic policies.

The latest figures indicate that inflation for the year will be nine to 10 per cent, compared to the government's target of 4.5 per cent, and is likely to rise further next year.

According to figures released by the state statistics office, consumer prices rose across the board but especially for imports and housing, which is denominated in dollars.

The Israeli shekel has lost nearly 11 per cent of its value against the dollar in recent weeks.

The cabinet held a stormy debate Sunday on the likely impact of the bank's tight money policy on Israel's already slowing economy.

Trade and Industry Minister Nathan Sharansky, Science Minister Silvan Shalom and Labour Minister Eli Yishai all sharply criticised the central bank's policies, warning they would push unemployment from the current level of around nine per cent to 13 per cent in coming months.

"The Bank of Israel has brought the economy to its current woeful state, 200,000 unemployed persons, high inflation and deep recession. Now it's time to review the policy," Yishai said in a letter to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and released by his office.

The cabinet scheduled another session to discuss the economic crisis later in the week.

Sharansky, whose Israel B'Alia Party represents recent Russian-speaking immigrants and is the third largest grouping in the government, said he will not be able to vote for the 1999 budget if the

current economic policy continues.

"It is not possible to allow the governor of the Bank of Israel to dictate a policy to which ministers are opposed," he said.

The ministers called on Netanyahu to increase the inflation target included in the government's 1999 budget from its current level of four per cent, saying the monetary and fiscal policies needed to honour the goal would create widespread economic hardship.

Bank of Israel Governor Yaacov Frenkel defended his decision to increase interest rates as necessary to prevent the Asian financial crisis from spilling over into Israel and said his critics were sniping at him for political reasons.

Frenkel said Sunday the government should not raise its 1999 inflation target despite renewed inflationary pressure ignited by a depreciation of the shekel.

"This is the government's prerogative. My own view is that one should make all efforts not to retreat in the fight against inflation," Frenkel told Reuters.

His comments came after Finance Minister Yaacov Neeman, responding to cabinet pressure, said earlier Sunday he would evaluate raising the target to a range of four to six per cent from the current 4.0 per cent goal for 1999.

Frenkel said he viewed the current surge in consumer prices as imported but warned that Israel could not tolerate higher inflation as the pace of consumer price increases worldwide was declining.

"It was the world crisis that shifted us away from four per cent inflation and there is no reason why policy should not aim and succeed in ensuring that this (recent) deviation is temporary," he said.

Frenkel defended his decision to raise lending rates sharply over the last two weeks, saying he aimed to send a "strong signal" that the bank would not tolerate the current surge in inflation from becoming a long-term phenomenon.

The central bank raised its base lending rate 2.0 percentage points late on Thursday in a surprise

move less than two weeks after a similar hike. The base rate is now 13.5 per cent.

He said holding the line on prices was especially critical now because it would influence the stance of labour unions in wage talks and because parliament was deliberating the 1999 budget.

Although many economists have said they expect the inflationary surge to be temporary due to slack consumer spending, Frenkel expressed concern inflationary expectations in the bond market signalled otherwise.

"There is no question that under the conditions of a slowdown, inflationary pressure in principle could be weaker and create an easier environment for fighting inflation. But the fact of the matter is that in a very short period of time inflationary expectations in the market have gone up," he said.

Frenkel said he was concerned the government's 1999 spending package would have a tough time in parliament. Legislators have until the end of the year to pass the budget, which seeks to trim the deficit to 2.0 per cent of gross domestic product.

"There is always the danger the compromise will be that government spending will be diverted from productive activities towards transfer payments and activities that are providing support for constituencies of various interest groups," he said.

"This danger is more prominent the closer one gets to an election period," Frenkel added.

Frenkel dismissed critics who said interest rates fluctuated too sharply and too frequently.

He said his move of the last year, during which rates were cut a total of 3.9 points through August and raised 4.0 points in October, reflected changing economic conditions.

"What has happened in the past two months has been the result of the world's financial shock," he said. "This is not a zig-zag, but a responsible response to changing circumstances."

Fed seen cutting rates to defend U.S. economy

WASHINGTON (AP) — Aiming to bolster the U.S. economy's defenses against a financial contagion that has spread around the globe, the Federal Reserve is expected to cut interest rates this week for the first time in less than 18 months.

Analysts said the move for the Fed to move rates down was a response to a global market turmoil that has shaken the U.S. economy, shown some signs of resilience.

Still, most said a rate cut was the most likely outcome of the Fed's policy meeting on Tuesday because it would reinforce the recent policy developments and help ensure that the U.S. economy remains firmly on track.

"I think there is a better-than-even chance that the Fed will move," said Michael Zandi, chief economist at the Regional Financial Associates in West Chester, Ohio. "The risks still are skewed toward a substantial shock in the U.S. economy."

Although those risks have changed from a few weeks ago when they were overwhelmingly skewed in one direction.

The Fed's policy meeting, which will convene at 2 p.m. on Tuesday to discuss monetary policy and the economy, will also announce a decision on whether to cut rates.

A Reuters poll after Friday showed that 21 of 22 economists expected the Fed to cut rates by a quarter point to 4.75 per cent from its current level of five per cent. The poll also showed that three thought the Fed would hold its fire for now.

The financial crisis erupted in Thailand in July and a half ago has sent shockwaves through the Asian economy to a halt. It has hit closer to home in the second half of the year, imperiling U.S. American economies sparking sharp volatility in U.S. financial markets.

APEC ministers buy time on tariffs

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — APEC ministers achieved a last-ditch compromise on Sunday by deciding to refer a key trade liberalisation package to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) after an acrimonious row over the lifting of tariffs.

A last-ditch ministerial session, including the United States, Japan and Malaysia, failed to clinch a concrete deal on fisheries and forestry products.

Japan had refused adamantly to contemplate cutting tariffs immediately in the two sectors due to their political sensitivity at home. The United States insisted it must, or the whole deal would be scuppered.

But the Japanese "were pleased with the outcome," said Japan's Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura after two days of often acrimonious ministerial talks at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting.

"We stood by the principle of voluntarism," he said after the ministers agreed to pass the package of tariff cuts in nine trade sectors on

to the World Trade Organisation with the intention of producing a bigger agreement by the end of 1999.

The spat over the issue between the United States, backed by several Western nations, and Japan, which won considerable sympathy in Asia as Tokyo prepared to unveil a \$30 billion aid package for the crisis-stricken region, was often heated.

The debate was "fierce," said Australian Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fisher. "A rather difficult meeting," said Canadian International Trade Minister Sergio Marchi.

What they did agree was that the entire package of tariff cuts on nine trade sectors would be passed immediately to the WTO in an effort to get many more countries to sign onto the deal by the end of next year.

They also agreed that those APEC members which wanted to put their offers into practice right away were free to do so.

But who would do what and when remained entirely unclear.

"Each will comply with various degrees to the com-

mitments that have been made," said Thai Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan, declining to elaborate.

Conference chairwoman Rafidah Aziz, the Malaysian trade minister, told reporters it would all take too long to explain.

Last year's Vancouver APEC meeting agreed to work on early tariff cuts that would open trade worth about \$1.5 trillion in nine sectors — environmental goods and services, fish and fish products, forest products, medical equipment, energy, toys, telecommunications, gems and jewellery, and chemicals.

Washington had been insisting the 16 APEC members involved should sign on for all nine sectors, but cutting tariffs on fishery and forest products would cause big political problems for Japan's already weak ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

"So instead of plan A we've got plan B. And plan B is to move it into the WTO. Plan B is not as good as plan A, but it's better than no plan at all," said Marchi.

Ministers were hoping to

clinch a deal on the tariffs, or Early Voluntary Sectoral Liberalisation (EVS), before the APEC summit on Tuesday and Wednesday.

"The leaders, we let them down somewhat," Marchi said.

But U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky was extremely upbeat on the deal.

"One year ago we had nothing. Two days ago we had the real possibility of having nothing. Obviously, the United States would have wished that Japan, as all the other countries, had agreed to cut tariffs now on fishery and forest products," she said.

"Now, along with 15-member economies, Japan has agreed all, including tariff cuts and elimination in all nine sectors going to the WTO. Movement to the WTO, for the U.S., is the most critical element."

Opening the nine sectors would be a step towards APEC's plans to become tariff-free by 2010 in developed economies and by 2020 for less developed economies.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Old-time singer
- Edith
- Faded and dull
- Music staff signs
- Roman Catholic calendar
- Optimistic
- Skater Sonja
- Den
- Dad's sister
- Anxiety
- Enough, old-style
- Copperfield's faithful friend
- Fiasco
- Last of cash?
- King of France
- Takes charge of
- Statue and Soli
- Tic-tac-toe win
- Hand gnp
- Shade
- Permit
- Music buys, briefly
- Former tomes
- Printer's line
- Spacer
- Acted as guide
- Nesi-egg S
- Of school
- Managerial qualification
- Whiskey spritz
- Popped out
- Sawbucks
- Tooties
- "Moll Flanders" author
- Bowling alley
- Office aide
- Soccer
- Reads quickly
- Seraglio areas
- Nerve network

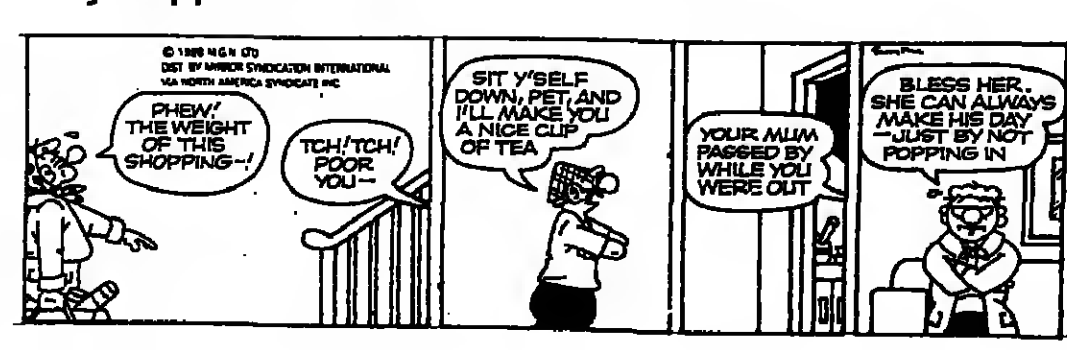
DOWN

- Propelled a punt
- Teheran resident
- Tiwanan la-ta positions
- Extreme
- Travelled way
- Actor Ed
- Eight bits
- Type of beetle
- Lady of "The Raven"
- Kin of a lithograph
- Closed hand
- Adam's
- Youngest
- Jacob the journalist
- du jour
- Scott Case
- Neighbor of N.Mex.
- Captured
- Scatters seed
- Third of M.L.
- Ya Shoppe
- Shuttle grp.
- Hired muscle
- But of course, Pierre
- Sleeping
- Polaris
- Snarl and growl
- Slips by
- "Play It as It Lays" author
- Ryan and Cara
- In front
- Demagogue of 87 B.C.
- Builtwinkle, e.g.
- That is (to say): Latin
- Hindu group
- Young guys
- Current or
- power, in brief
- Romeo (Italian car)
- Town near Caen

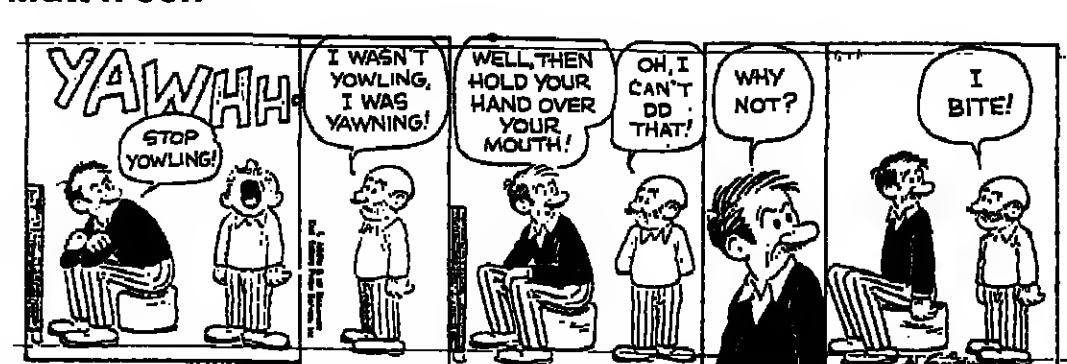
Peanuts



Andy Capp



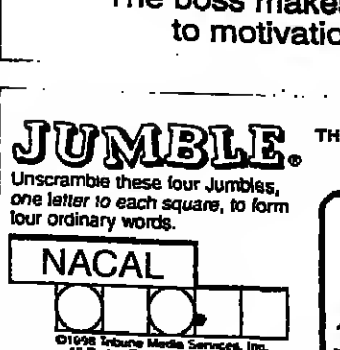
Mutt'n Jeff



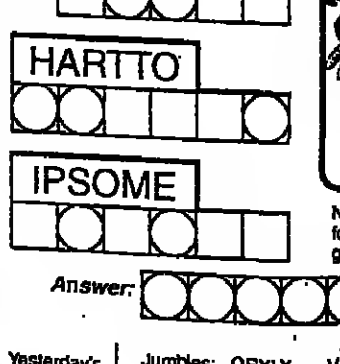
THE BETTER HALF.



JUMBLE.



London Taxis



Ohio entrepreneurs bring advertising to U.S. toilets

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AFP) — Believing that toilet time should not go down the drain, two local entrepreneurs are installing computer screens above restroom urinals so that men can have something else to look at while heading the call of nature.

The high-definition LCD display panels give sports scores and schedules in real time, streaming by ticker-tape style under a local company's advertising.

Sports Screen Advertising is the brainchild of former Intel and CompuServe sales executive Kyle Mullins and

financial consultant James Malcolm.

The two — who hope to become number one in toilet advertising — say they came up with the idea over drinks.

"Guys don't look around when using urinals. And they sure don't talk to people," Mullins told AFP.

After covertly observing that men typically make three trips, of a minute each, to the restroom on an average night out, they figured that was long enough and often enough for them to be exposed to Sports Screen Advertising.

"They have to stand there and face straight ahead. They beg to look at something other than the porcelain," Mullins said. "So they are eager to read what's on the screen."

The two partners hope their idea will leave them flushed with success.

They expect to place Sports Screen in 12 Columbus locations drawing at least 4,000 men each week.

Sports Screen ads appear 12 times each hour, and advertisers pay \$150 a month.

"The list of potential advertisers is very broad,"

said Malcolm. "Just about any male-oriented product that is upscale would be good for this type of advertising."

Installation is simple and requires access to a phone line.

Businesses with Sports Screen on their premises pay nothing for the service and get three seconds every minute of their own ads.

"The establishments that installed Sports Screen like the idea that they can advertise their food, drink and entertainment specials every minute," said Mullins.

Reading in the toilet is nothing new. Nor is the commercial motive uncommon in public toilets. But the typical posterboard signs are easily defaced or destroyed by inebriated visitors.

By contrast, Sports Screen can withstand heavy punishment, its promoters say.

The partners say they are getting calls from around the United States looking to license their product.

And if their idea makes a splash, they add, women's restrooms and bar entries may be next.

Markets need to embrace true credit culture — Standard and Poor's

MELBOURNE, Australia (AFP) — A true credit culture that accepts sovereign defaults, bank failures and corporate bankruptcies as a part of the financial marketplace needs to emerge, the president of international ratings agency Standard and Poor's said Monday.

"Such a credit culture must be based on much more transparent financial systems," said Leo O'Neill, also chief rating officer.

He said the uncertain global environment had forced institutions to seek new risk frameworks and lending practices which applied on a worldwide level.

"Markets, economies, investors are becoming interconnected and interdependent," he told a luncheon here.

O'Neill said he had seen many tumultuous times and the present was clearly one of them.

"In each of these crises there was a clear period of market turmoil characterised as a flight to quality," he said.

"And as we are currently mid-air in such a flight, it is important to recognise that as painful as they are, they are necessary periods of recalibrating the credit markets' risk-reward ratio," he added.

At the heart of the pain in markets around the world was the search for a new framework to pricing risk on a global basis.

He said the frontline players in the present crisis were not the development banks or the syndicated lenders, rather asset managers of high-yield bond and equity funds struggling to accommodate a wholesale shift in investment sentiment among a wide range of individual investors.

The experience was teaching the world that the shift to a truly global market was rockier than many expected.

"That appears to be the nature of the shift and if you based your perceptions of progress on a snapshot impression it might seem that things are getting worse, not better," he said.

"This is the wrong impression. All of us in the financial community need to remain engaged in this process toward more open markets characterised by transparency and the free flow of information," he added.

O'Neill said perhaps the most challenging in the current deliberations was the search for a financial architecture which would bolster systemic confidence while allowing individual defaults and losses.

He was glowing in his praise of the "soundness and efficiency of the Australian banking system."

It has given comfort to investors amid the depreciation and volatility in the Australian dollar during 1998, he said, adding that Australia's sound market fundamentals had made the country a standout in the Asian region over the last 12 months.

Oil majors could invest \$5 billion in Kuwait — minister

KUWAIT (R) — Foreign oil majors could invest more than \$5 billion to boost production from northern Kuwaiti fields, Kuwait Oil Minister Sheikh Saud Nassar Al Sabah, has said.

But the minister again stressed that Kuwait does not plan to force production sharing agreements with foreign oil firms in violation of the country's constitution and that parliament's approval of any deals would be sought.

The accords "are simply for using technology of American and European firms...in producing oil. These firms (could) invest more than \$5 billion to develop the northern fields and double their production," the minister said.

Kuwait's plans to open up its state-controlled domestic upstream operations to foreign participation has triggered fresh concern in parliament which is seeking a firmer hold on the country's natural resources.

Last month leading Kuwaiti parliamentarians, led by Speaker Ahmad Al Saadoun, presented a draft law aimed at controlling moves to open the oil sector to foreign firms, demanding a crucial say in the major policy shift.

It seeks to oblige the government not to sign deals until after a law is issued "governing foreign investment in oil fields, set state rights...obligations by the foreign investor...and the method of picking a foreign

investor and the duration of the investment."

But Sheikh Saud reiterated that Kuwait was only seeking operational accords with foreign firms, almost two decades after the tiny state fully nationalised its strategic oil sector.

Deals with foreign firms "will not be concluded until after approval by the cabinet, parliament and the Supreme Petroleum Council (SPC)," the minister emphasised.

International hopes for a role in Kuwait's upstream operations, including oil fields close to the northern border with former occupier Iraq, were renewed last year when the SPC gave approval in principle to foreign participation.

The SPC is the country's highest oil decision-making body which is chaired by first deputy prime minister and foreign minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

Sheikh Saud said that foreign firms were needed in order to provide technology for meeting Kuwait's plans to raise daily production capacity to more than three million barrels early in the next century from a current 2.5 million barrels.

At current production levels of just under two million barrels per day, Kuwait's oil reserves, about 10 per cent of proven world reserves, could last it more than 100 years.

Production costs in Kuwait are under a \$1 a barrel.

The minister said that under pending deals, a foreign oil firm will have the right to employ 30 per cent of its workforce in Kuwait from the company's country of origin, 10 per cent of other foreigners and 60 per cent Kuwaitis.

"In return for every barrel produced, this (foreign) firm will have a cut which will be decided according to the level of investment in technology to produce the crude," he added.

Sheikh Saud also stressed that foreign firms will have no hold on the country's reserves or export levels — a key condition for the OPEC member which often calls for full compliance with OPEC production quotas.

Russia looks to close up to half its banks

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia is looking to close up to half the country's commercial banks as it simply does not have the cash to bail them out, a top Central Bank official has said.

In the clearest indication yet of the extent of the fallout of Russia's financial meltdown on its vulnerable banking sector, Central Bank Deputy Chairman Andrei Kozlov said up to 720 out of 1,500 commercial banks could be forced into bankruptcy.

And as the desperate hunt for money to stave off outright economic collapse in Moscow continued, the broke government said it needed funds from Japan, from privatisations — and from the central bank itself to balance an increasingly lopsided budget equation through the end of the year.

Russia's banks have undoubtedly been the biggest losers of the August ruble devaluation and debt default. The currency slide left them exposed to huge forward contracts, while the default froze one of their key assets, short-term treasury bills.

A panic-fuelled stampede by customers further reduced assets.

Moreover, from Monday banks face D-day when a government-imposed 90-day moratorium on repaying

loans taken out with Western banks expires.

Kozlov said that against this background, the central bank was to approve a sweeping reform of the banking system under which some 200 banks deemed key to regional and social needs would be helped at a cost of \$4 billion rubles (\$3.4 billion).

But some 720 banks with a third of all private deposits were beyond the pale, he added in comments to parliamentarians carried by Interfax. It would cost some 80 billion rubles (\$5.03 billion) to save these banks.

"We don't have that money," Kozlov said.

Bank Chairman Viktor Geraschenko said later on Russian television that the central bank would not announce bank failures one by one but altogether in one go at the end of November.

"Many banks are small and not so important for economic development," he said, adding nonetheless that "we must maintain our own national banking system."

The central bank has been pumping funds through large commercial banks to ensure their survival in the brutal aftermath of the financial crisis. Other big banks such as Inkombank and Bank Imperial have been allowed to collapse.

But the central bank is also being petitioned by the government for funds to help it patch up an increasingly threadbare budget and avoid the need for inflationary money-printing.

The government has pencilled in a deficit of over 60 billion rubles (\$4 billion) but some experts say the actual shortfall could be twice the size.

Finance Minister Mikhail Zadornov said that to fill the hole his ministry wanted the central bank to buy up some 20 billion rubles of new government securities.

Bank officials said, however, that 15 billion rubles was all the central bank could afford. Its reserves shrunk by \$200 million last week to \$13.4 billion, while the Russian currency has recently shown renewed signs of vulnerability, slipping to 15.93 to the dollar from around 15 earlier in the week.

Zadornov also said that the yawning budget hole could be filled partly by an \$800 million loan tranche, which Japanese officials say Tokyo may advance by year-end.

Besides that, Moscow is still hoping to rake in the \$650 million proceeds from the sell-off of a 2.5 per cent stake in gas giant Gazprom by year end. If the sale is successful, the money should land by Christmas Day.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Looks like some difficulty with partnership and finances today. You want things to go one way, and they appear to be taking just the opposite turn. Try not to act impulsively. Planning is the key to your success. It's the key to everyone's, actually; the person who does the most planning is likely to have the most success.

TALURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You'll notice a strong attraction to a person with whom you have nothing in common. (This is someone you love to hate, and hate to love). Neither of you wants the other to get the last word. Passions will be intense through the next couple of days, so if you can manage to schedule some time for a very private discussion, do that.

GEMINE: (May 21 to June 21) A conversation this morning could make you forget just about everything else. Knowing that ahead of time, you might want to avoid calling that special someone when you first wake up, or rolling over and talking to him or her. But don't worry too much about it. Being late for work isn't the worst thing in the world.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) You'd like to call in sick today. It looks like you'd rather stay home and cuddle with the one you love. Or somebody at home may be under the weather, and you'd like to be able to fuss over him or her. Whatever it is, do as much of it as possible today, whether you can take the day off or not.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) If there's any information you need, ask about it today. The chances of getting a straight answer are better than they will be during the middle of the week, although by the weekend conditions shift again, and it'll be easier to get the truth. If you'd like a little head start, contact your favourite stool pigeons now.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You've been in the mood to study, so why not take advantage of that situation while it lasts? The obvious thing for you to focus that attention on is your finances. Whip those into shape and write up a budget you can live with. It'll be time you want to spend on something else later.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) If you're careful about

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

what you say, you'll be able to achieve your ends through negotiation. That should be your objective, because it looks like the direct method won't work yet. Don't be tricked into tipping your hand too far. There's still a lot to be said for holding back just a little.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You're under quite a bit of pressure today. It's some sort of paperwork you were supposed to have turned in. Better do it now, or the bureaucrats will come down on you big time. Once you've got it out of the way, you'll notice that you become a lot more powerful.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Looks like friends need some attention, and you're willing to provide it. You'd rather go and play than take care of business, especially today. That's because there's some nagging chore you've been avoiding. The bad news is that it's going to get worse before it gets better. Take care of it today, while you're in a playful frame of mind.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A person in authority doesn't seem to be able to make a decision. You may have to take control and dictate how it's going to be. That would save time, and in this case, time is money. Get together with friends this evening and plan an activity that will do some good in your neighbourhood.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your heart isn't in your work this morning. You'd rather be just about anywhere else. There's an authority figure intent on having things done exactly to specifications. If you're smart, you'll go along. Don't even think about arguing. There's absolutely no point in doing that until Thursday, at least.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Looks like some paperwork is getting away from you. If you haven't looked through that stack in a while, you might be surprised to see hills you forgot you even had. Get those paid. Later on, try something unusual. Get out for a romp in an unfamiliar neighbourhood, one you've always wanted to check out. It'll be fun and rejuvenating.

'Creative' industry generates £60b in Britain

LONDON (AFP) — "Creative" industries, such as music, publishing and other arts, generate 60 billion pounds (\$100 billion) a year in revenues and have the potential to create 50,000 new jobs in the next three years, the government has said.

The survey said the sector, ranging from artists to high-paid advertising men, already employs 1.4 million people, exporting 7.5 billion pounds (\$12.4 billion) worth of goods and services.

Culture Secretary Chris Smith said: "With a growth rate of five per cent, the creative industries are generating new jobs and new wealth for Britain faster than any other part of the economy."

The survey was the first major official study of the commercial potential of the creative industries.

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Asian Games to showcase tennis to wider audience

100

LOCAL SPORTS CORNER



Special Olympics holds course

AMMAN — The Special Olympics for the Handicapped in conjunction with the Jordan Special Olympics Sunday launched a basketball training course for mentally handicapped women, which aims at activating the sport among Arab women. Deputising for HRH Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid, Khaled Majali, head of the department of youth at the Ministry of Culture and Youth opened the five-day course which included participants from Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Morocco, Sudan, Bahrain, Tunisia and Algeria.

Egypt's Ahli win handball tournament

AMMAN — Egypt's Al Ahli won the Arab Handball Champion Clubs Tournament which was held under the patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya. The seven teams taking part in the 20th men's championship included Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli who came second, Qatar's Qatar Club third, Jordan's Al Ahli fourth, Al Ahli and Al Jazireh of the United Arab Emirates came fifth and sixth and Jordan's Al Salt seventh. Titleholders, Egypt's Sporting, in addition to runner-up Egypt's Al Zamalek were absent. Algeria's Mawloudiah won the seven-team 2nd championship for women. Titleholders Tunisia's Jameyat al Sahel came second, Samouhah of Egypt third, Egypt's Al Ahli fourth, Syria's Al Ithad Al Halabi fifth, Jordan's Al Orthodoxy sixth and Jordan's champions Hartha seventh.

Karate team in Cyprus

AMMAN — The Kingdom's karate team has arrived in Cyprus to participate in its International Karate Championship after the team concluded a training in Greece, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus and Greece are participating in the event. A similar team started a three-day training camp in Aqaba in preparation for the Asian Games which will be held in Bangkok Dec. 6-20.

Athletics team leaves for Qatar

AMMAN — The country's athletics team left for Qatar to hold a three-week training camp in conjunction with the Qatari Federation as part of the team's preparations for the Asian Games, which will be held in Bangkok Dec. 6-20, and next summer's Aug. 15-31 Pan-Arab Games which will be held in Amman.

Compiled by Ahmad Khatib

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNIA HIRSCH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q 1 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
A 75 CAJS OKJ02 AA104
- The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1 Pass 17 Pass
2 What do you bid now?
A - You have the choice of two unpleasant alternatives — raising partner's major with only three-card support or rebidding one no trump without a real stopper in one of the unbid suits. With no trilling value, we prefer one no trump. At least that gives an accurate picture of your distribution and strength.
- Q 2 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
A Q4 CAQ4 317432 A387
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
A - If your no-trump range is 15-17, clearly you have to be content with an invitational raise to two no trump. Even if you play 18-19 no trumps, your weak five-card suit and secondary honors, some of which might not be working, warrant caution. Bid two no trump.
- Q 3 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AAQ0 310843 432 AA66
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
A - Clearly, the white bid is two no trump, but to take that action without a sure stopper in either red suit is unthinkable. You have a four-card major and, though it is weak and your hand is square, there is no reason not to show it. Bid one heart.
- Q 4 - East-West vulnerable, as
- AAQJ9754 7Q2 7R2 AQT
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you bid now?
A - You have a hand that does not have much in defense, but an offense should deliver six tricks with spades as trumps. Tell partner this by making the jump overcall of three spades. You need more defense to bid just one spade.
- Q 5 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AAK53 7Q1074 10 AKQ74
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1 Pass 17 Pass
2 What do you bid now?
A - In support of hearts, your hand values to about 18 points. Since partner should have at least 8 and a reasonable suit for the free bid, you should have enough for game. Bid four hearts. Those who play splinter bids can show their singleton by jumping to four diamonds, but with both opponents in the auction, hinting at slam with only one ace is not recommended.
- Q 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
A38764 7AQ3 3Void AAQJ76
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1 Pass 17 Pass
2 What do you bid now?
A - There is no reason why you should not continue to develop your hand. Bid three clubs now, then raise hearts later, with a jump should the auction merit it.

Roma take over 2nd place

ROME (AP) — It may have been a changing of the guard. Young AS Roma controlled the action, scored late in each half and generally seemed the more poised club Sunday as it beat Juventus of Turin 2-0 to take over second place from the two-time defending Italian League champions.

Both Roma and Juventus are just one point behind Serie A leader Fiorentina, which went down to a 4-2 loss at Piacenza in a match that featured three of the day's eight penalty kicks.

Roma's collection of young, swift players (Totti is 23, Candela 25) who fit well into Czech coach Zdenek Zeman's attack-first philosophy has now beaten both Fiorentina and Juventus this season. The capital's club looks capable of making a run at its first league title since 1955.

There were extenuating circumstances for Juventus, though.

Coach Marcello Lippi, serving a one-game suspension for yelling at the referee last week, watched the game from the stands. And more significantly, it was the team's first game since star striker Alessandro Del Piero

went down with what is likely to be a season-ending knee injury.

Fiorentina (6-0-3) has no such excuse.

The league's best attack was simply outscored by 10th-place Piacenza, the only all-Italian Serie A club. Paolo Cristallini broke a 2-2 half-time tie with a header in the 58th minute, and Giampiero Piovani added a late, insurance goal for Piacenza.

Fiorentina has 18 points, Roma (which owns the league's best goal differential of plus-9) and Juventus 17, and AC Parma — which beat Udinese 4-1 as Argentine striker Hernan Crespo had a hat-trick — is fourth with 16. Elsewhere Sunday, French striker Youri Djorkaeff hit two penalty kicks in the first half to lift Internazionale of Milan past Sampdoria of Genoa 3-0; last-place Venezia stunned Italian Cup holder Lazio of Rome 2-0; Giuseppe Signori's hat-trick led Bologna past Vicenza 4-0; Marco Di Vaio scored twice to lead Salernitana past Perugia 2-0, and Arturo Di Napoli's double gave Empoli a 2-1 win over Cagliari.

Al Aynaoui in final

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Francisco Clavet of Spain and Younes Al Aynaoui of Morocco both scored straight-set victories Saturday and advanced to the final of the \$320,000 Chevrolet Cup.

Al Aynaoui defeated Felix Mantilla of Spain 6-4, 6-4 in a match played under a scorching sun at the San Carlos stadium in the Santiago's Andes foothills.

Later, Clavet rode the cheers of the local fans over Juan Antonio Marin of Costa Rica 6-2, 7-5.

The crowd was clearly partisan for Clavet after Marin upset local hero Marcelo Rios to the quarterfinals Friday.

The defeat only eliminated Rios from his hometown tournament for the first time, but also derailed his hopes of recovering the No. 1 ATP Tour ranking this week.

All Africa Games to be used for Olympic qualifying

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The 7th All Africa Games to be staged in South Africa next year will be used by 10 sporting codes as Olympic qualification events, a senior African sports official said Sunday.

Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) president Jean Claude Ganga told a press conference here this arrangement would prevent duplication and save money for the continent's sports bodies.

Ganga was responding to a question of why the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA) had opted for 19 sports codes at the 1999 Games when it had been suggested — by Ganga himself — after the chaotic Harare Games in 1995 that the event be limited to 10 or 12 codes.

Ganga said it had been decided to host 19 sporting codes as many countries in Africa would next year in any case be forced to stage Olympic qualifying events.

"Gradually the All Africa Games are becoming qualifying events for the Olympic Games," Ganga said through an interpreter.

"We will do everything in our power to ensure that at the next Games in Nigeria (in 2003) even more sporting codes are able to qualify," he added.

Officials revealed at the press conference, held on the sidelines of a two-day SCSA planning meeting for the September 10-19 Games, that some 5,000 to 6,000 athletes are expected to attend.

Dan Moyo, chairman of the All Africa Games' sports commission, which is facilitating the programme for the event, said in a loco inspection Saturday of venues earmarked for next year's meeting had left SCSA officials "very satisfied."

"There are only a few arrangements still to be made," Moyo told the press conference.

Many of the events, he added, would be staged in Soweto black township, where existing facilities would be upgraded to Games standard.

"We must empower the communities that are hosting the Games so that they see they are benefiting from these Games," Moyo said.

The operational costs of staging the event, he added, were estimated at around 107 million rand (\$18.6 million). Of this, the South African government had committed 40 million rand (\$6.9 million), while the private sector had already come up with 30 million rand (\$5.2 million).

Graf storms into final at Advanta Championships

PHILADELPHIA (AFP) — Germany's Steffi Graf continued her mastery of Nathalie Tauziat Saturday as she moved into her second straight final at the \$450,000 Advanta Championships.

Graf, who defeated Tauziat to win in Leipzig last week, needed just over an hour to dispose of the sixth-seeded French woman 6-1, 6-4.

With the victory, Graf improved to 21-0 lifetime without losing a set against Tauziat.

Graf, 29, will take a nine-match winning streak into

Sunday's final, where she will meet world number one and top seed Lindsay Davenport.

Davenport downed fifth-seeded Monica Seles 6-3, 6-3 in an all-American semi-final.

She will be gunning for her 106th singles title — tops among active players — and third in only her 12th tournament of an injury-filled season.

Graf, who came back from wrist surgery last week, gained the 16th and final spot at next week's season-ending Chase Championships following

Venus Williams' withdrawal. Graf's other title this year came in August in New Haven, Connecticut.

The top-seeded Davenport, last year's runner-up in Philadelphia, earned a semi-final berth Friday by rallying for a three-set victory over American qualifier Amy Frazier. Seles, the fifth seed and 1991 champion, lost only one game in her victory over Natasha Zvereva of Belarus.

Davenport, 22, has won a WTA Tour-leading six titles this year, including a victory over Hingis in the U.S.

Opeo final for her first Grand Slam singles title. Entering this week, she led the Swiss teenager by only 266 points in the rankings.

Davenport has reached the final of three of her last four tournaments, including a victory at the European Championships in Zurich in her most recent event.

Seles also has fared well recently, reaching the final of her last two tournaments. She won the Princess Cup in Japan and lost to Mary Pierce in the final of the Ladies Kremlin Cup.

Matthaus tells media and Bayern to forget his age

COLOGNE (AFP) — Lothar Matthaus will make another comeback to the German national team against Holland next week but is annoyed about constant sniping whether he is even good enough to still be playing professional football at the age of 37.

The veteran libero, who captained Germany to the World Cup in 1990 and broke the record for appearances in World Cup finals matches this year, fought his way back into Bayern Munich's side this month after a hamstring tear and is still as good a player in defence as he ever was.

But the issue of his age refuses to disappear.

"I'm 37 — I know that myself and it's written often enough in the media. I don't need to make sure by looking in my passport or in the newspaper. There's no problem from my side. If I become a burdeo then talk to me openly," he said.

Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld raised the issue a week ago in an interview with a Swiss newspaper.

"When the time comes that another player is better than Matthaus in his position then I will have to take the appropriate action," he told the Zurich paper "Sport".

But that doesn't mean the time has come already. Matthaus signed a new two-year contract over the summer under the advice of Bayern's powerful president and his good friend Franz Beckenbauer. That runs until June 30th 2000, a full season and a half away.

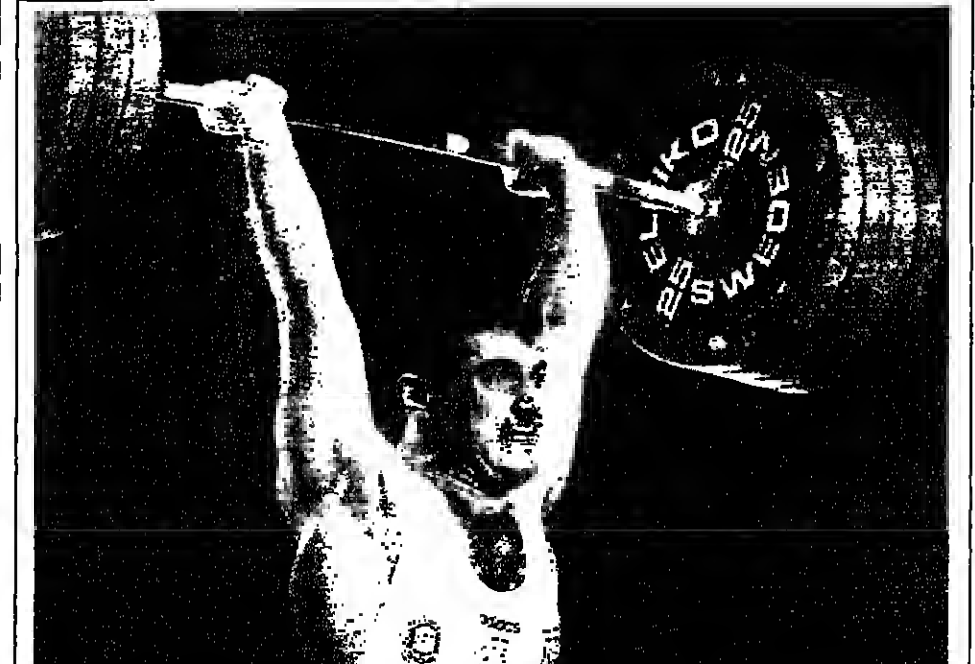
"I've always said I'm the last person who insists on fulfilling contracts. If I become a burden for the team then the trainer or management should speak to me openly."

"I'm ready any time to clear the way. It should be done behind closed doors though and not in the media, hammered out like real men, the same way we did with my contract," he added.

Matthaus believes the media are playing a leading role in what he sees as a conspiracy to edge him out. He claims that reports of a power struggle between himself and Stefan Effenberg and Mario Basler to be top dog are pure fiction.

"We've got some differing views but that's normal," Matthaus said.

"We have shared some harsh words but none of us holds a grudge. This thing about being boss in the team is always played up in the media. They need their stories and Bayern Munich has enough players who are suitable for such stories," he added.



Akakios Kakiavilis of Greece in action to take the clean and jerk gold medal of the men's 94 kg category at the World Weightlifting Championships in Lahti, Finland (AFP photo)

Bayern fail to impress, stay top

COLOGNE (AFP) — Two second half goals gave Bayern Munich a 2-0 victory over Stuttgart on Saturday, their 10th win in 12 matches, to keep the Bavarians top of the Bundesliga.

The extra rest that the players had gained from having their midweek match against Borussia Monchengladbach postponed appeared to have had an adverse effect as their star lie-up produced a lethargic performance.

"That surprised me," Bayern keeper Oliver Kahn said.

"I thought we would push forward more in the first-half and he a bit fresher but that's got more to do with the opposition. When they play well and stay tight then it's not so easy," he added.

Bayern finally woke up three minutes into the second-half when midfielder Steffen Effenberg scored following a quickly taken throw in.

"We should have gone ahead earlier — and extended our lead sooner," Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld said.

There were several curious refereeing decisions — a 33rd minute Giovane Elber goal was adjudged offside against his former club and Stuttgart's Timo Rost ought to have been sent off for a bad foul — but none stranger than the one involving Frank

Verlaet.

The Stuttgart captain was shown the red card for pulling down Lothar Matthaus late in the game. However, Verlaet never left the pitch as the referee overruled his decision when a linesman indicated he had already stopped play a split second beforehand because Elber was offside.

Iranian star Ali Daei capped Bayern's win in the 90th minute, the home side's second goal and 26th home win over Stuttgart in their last 27 encounters.

"I have to congratulate the team, it was a good performance," Stuttgart coach Winfried Schafer said.

"We tried everything. Two mistakes and two goals, that was it. A pity," he added.

Borussia Dortmund also put in an unimpressive performance but were still good enough to beat Schalke 04 3-0 and surprised many by announcing after the game that their former Brazilian international Julio Cesar is coming back.

The 35-year-old defender, who starred for Brazil back in the 1986 World

Cup, was one of Borussia's most influential players in their golden years when they won successive Bundesliga titles in 1995 and 1996 and the 1997 European Cup.

Cesar spent much of last season sidelined with knee problems and left Dortmund in June after four successful years because he was homesick.

But things failed to work out at his new club Botafogo.

"It's tough to say no when a player like Julio Cesar wants to come back," Dortmund's manager Michael Meier said.

"We have signed a performance related contract with him whereby he is paid according to the number of games he plays," he added.

Cesar's return should mark the end of Alfred Nijhuis, the Dutch defender who was bought from Duisburg to replace him. However, Nijhuis responded in style by scoring the opening goal pushing Dortmund up to sixth.

"I guessed it would happen. Football is a really tough business," Nijhuis said.

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SPORTS IN BRIEF

Gilmour wins Nippon Cup

HAYAMA, Japan (AFP) — Peter Gilmour of Australia skipped Japan's Pizza-La sailing team to victory in the Nippon Cup world yachting match race championship on Sunday. The team overcame a slow start to win the first two races in a best-of-three battle against a French crew skippered by Bertrand Pace on the final day at Hayama marina, near Tokyo. Gilmour and three other Japanese crew were the members of Nippon Challenge, which will take part in the 2000 America's Cup to be held off Auckland, New Zealand.

Pantani delighted with '99 Italy Tour

MILAN (AFP) — Reigning Tour of Italy champion Marco Pantani was delighted with the unveiling of the 1999 course here on Saturday to make up for his disappointment over the 1999 Tour de France route. The 28-year-old climber, who also won this year's Tour de France, will have five mountain finishes but only face 76km in time-tri-

als, which is his major weakness. Pantani, nicknamed 'Il Pirata' because of his shaved head, earring and colourful bandanas, said the route suited him very well. The news makes up for Pantani's disappointment nine days ago over the Tour de France route which he believed had too many time-trials and he hinted he might not defend his title.

Shearer doubtful for England

LONDON (AFP) — Newcastle striker Alan Shearer looks certain to miss England's midweek friendly against the Czech Republic at Wembley after damaging a hamstring on Saturday. Shearer failed to reappear for the second-half of Newcastle's 1-1 draw with Sheffield Wednesday at St James' Park, and manager Ruud Gullit later revealed that his chances of turning out for his country on Wednesday are slim. "If he couldn't play here he can't play for England," Gullit said. And in a further blow to Hoddle's plans, Manchester United star Paul Scholes also pulled a hamstring and is doubtful for England although he scored twice in United's 3-2 victory over Blackburn Rovers.

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Israel shows withdrawal maps to W. Bank settlers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli ministers presented maps for proposed troop withdrawals from the West Bank to Jewish settler leaders Sunday but only heightened the militants' opposition to the pullbacks required under the Wye peace accord.

Following a heated, three-hour meeting with Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and other members of a cabinet "map committee," the settlers accused the nationalist government and ruling Likud Party of forcing them to abandon their homes.

"The Likud government is creating a Palestinian state and forcing us out of our homes," said Benny Kasriel, a leader of the Council of Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"The maps presented to us today force us to abandon our homes in at least two areas, in the southern part of Mount Hebron and in the northern part of Samaria," Kasriel said, using the Jewish term for the northern West Bank.

Under the Wye agreement signed in Washington on Oct. 23, Israel is to transfer an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank now under its exclusive control to full or partial Palestinian rule and withdraw completely from another 14 per cent of the territory now under joint control.

In exchange for the pullbacks, due to begin this week and be phased over three months, the Palestinians are to carry out a parallel crackdown aimed at halting anti-Israeli violence by opposition militants.

Israel has not made its withdrawal maps public, or presented them officially to the Palestinians, although Israeli press reports say the pullback will involve scattered areas of land, three per cent of which will be declared a "nature reserve" where building will be prohibited.

Israel radio reported Sunday that the plan also involved the dismantling of three army outposts in the West Bank.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also discussed the pullback plan Sunday with the two ministers from the political party of the settlement movement, the National Religious Party (NRP).

The NRP, which accounts for nine of the ruling coalition's 61 seats in the 120-member parliament, fiercely opposes the further West Bank withdrawals.

The NRP leadership is due to meet later Sunday to decide if the party will back a bill currently in parliament to call new elections.

The party's backing for the bill will virtually ensure its passage and force elections to be moved up from their scheduled date in the year 2000 to early next year.

The Israeli withdrawal was originally scheduled to begin on Nov. 16 but has been postponed until at least the end of the week so the Knesset can ratify the accord.

The vote, virtually certain to approve the deal, is scheduled for Tuesday evening.



Israeli soldiers point their guns as they rush after stone-throwers on Sunday. Israeli troops clashed with stone-throwing Palestinian demonstrators protesting against Israeli confiscation of the West Bank lands to build roads for Jewish settlements, witnesses said (Reuters photo)

Turkey warns against granting asylum to Ocalan

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey stepped up the pressure on Italy for the extradition of captured Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan, warning Sunday that granting him asylum would amount to "opening doors to terrorism."

In Rome, 1,500 Kurds massed for a second day of demonstrations outside the military hospital where Ocalan is believed to be held under tight security. Kurds arrived from Germany and France to show solidarity with the rebel leader. A Kurdish group stopped at Rome's airport launched a hunger strike.

If Italy sends Ocalan back to Turkey, "he'll be tortured for certain," said Dino Frisullo, an Italian supporter among the singing, chanting Kurds outside the military hospital. "And very possibly he'll be killed."

Ocalan was arrested Thursday at the Rome airport as soon as he stepped off a plane from Moscow, where he had sought asylum after fleeing his hideout in Syria.

He leads the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party, PKK, which has been fighting for Kurdish autonomy in south-eastern Turkey since 1984. The conflict has killed nearly 37,000 people.

Turkey considers Ocalan a terrorist and its most-wanted criminal.

"If Western European nations open their arms [to the rebels] they will be taking on this great terrorism problem," Deputy Premier Bulent Ecevit told reporters in Ankara.

"If Italy continues to show the tolerance it showed yesterday, it will be opening its doors to terrorism," Ecevit added, referring to Italy's ban-

dling of brawls that broke out among the Kurdish demonstrators in Rome on Saturday.

The protests were peaceful Sunday. Ocalan faces the death penalty in Turkey, a fact that has heightened opposition in Italy to his extradition.

Although there have been no executions in Turkey since 1984, Italy has consistently refused to extradite anyone if there were even a risk of capital punishment.

Foreign Minister Ismail Cem left for Rome on Sunday to attend a meeting of European defence and foreign ministers, saying he would tell Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini that "we expect a serious and fair approach."

He criticised an Italian Justice Ministry official, who reportedly said Italy would deny Turkey's extradition request.

"To announce the results of an extradition trial that has not yet even begun does not go hand in hand with justice," Cem told reporters before departing.

In Istanbul, Turkish inmates at a prison took an Italian prisoner hostage to increase pressure for Ocalan's extradition. Meris prison officials said the jail director was talking to the inmate captors.

Ocalan, a political science dropout from Ankara University, founded the Marxist-inspired PKK in 1978. He turned the group toward armed struggle in 1984, finding wide support among poor Kurds in the under-developed southeast.

The Turkish army claims to have all but wiped out the PKK within Turkey but the rebels have havens in Iran, Syria, and Iraq and the fighting continues.

Israel bars Palestinian political meeting in Arab east Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israeli police closed down a theatre in Arab east Jerusalem and stationed men around the building to prevent Palestinian activists from holding a political meeting on Sunday.

Police posted a closure notice early Sunday morning on the door of the Hakawati theatre, where members of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement from Jerusalem had been due to hold their first conference.

The activists met instead in Ramallah where Arafat gave a fiery speech warning that Palestinians' "rifles are ready" to defend their goal of making Jerusalem the capital of a future independent state.

Police said the Fatah members had planned to hold a local leadership election in what amounted to an official function of the Palestinian National Authority in violation of interim peace agreements

which bar activities by the authority in east Jerusalem.

"Police served managers of the theatre with an order signed by the public security minister preventing Fatah members from holding an election of the Palestinian National Authority," said police spokeswoman Linda Menubin.

"Such political activities by the Palestinian National Authority in Jerusalem are prohibited under the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements," she said.

The Fatah conference had been timed to coincide with the anniversary of a 1988 PLO "declaration of independence" made by the body in Algiers.

The symbolic declaration, issued during the intifada uprising against Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, said the capital of the Palestinian homeland would be Jerusalem.

Israel occupied east Jerusalem in 1967 and ille-

gally annexed it as part of the "eternal capital" of the Jewish state although the annexation has not been recognised by the international community.

The Palestinians hope to make Arab east Jerusalem the capital of an independent state of their own and the future of the sector is to be decided through negotiations on a permanent Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement.

Arafat renewed vows over the weekend to unilaterally declare "Palestinian" statehood in May 1999, when interim peace accords with Israel expire.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reaffirmed on Sunday that Israel would view such a move as a de facto cancellation of the peace accords and his spokesman said one result would be the annexation by Israel of some occupied lands.

Hizbollah attacks Israeli positions

MARJAYOUN (AP) — Lebanese resistance fired rockets and mortars Sunday at Israeli positions in southern Lebanon along the border with the Jewish state, Lebanese security officials said.

A statement by Hizbollah fighters said the morning attacks were in response to daily Israeli air attacks on South Lebanon for the past week.

It said the guerrillas targeted 11 outposts belonging to Israeli troops and their South Lebanon Army militia allies in the central and western

sectors of an Israeli-occupied enclave in South Lebanon.

Hizbollah and the security officials, speaking on customary condition of anonymity, said the targets included military positions in the Lebanese village of Blat and Abbad, both about 500 metres north of the Israeli border.

An Israeli army spokesman in occupied Jerusalem said the guerrilla shelling damaged an Israeli post in the western sector of the enclave but that none of the shells overshot the border.

Syria made sweeping concessions to Turkey

(Continued from page 1)

"Syria will not allow PKK members to use its country for transit to third countries," the agreement says.

Moreover "Syria will not allow the supply of weapons, logistical material, financial support and propaganda activities of the PKK on its territory," it says.

As reported in Ankara, Damascus also undertook to provide lists of PKK militants it said were being held in Syria.

"Their lists have been prepared — Syria presented these lists to the Turkish side," the agreement said.

To monitor implementation of the agreement, Damascus agreed to set up a "direct phone link" between top security officials and to add "two special representatives" to their respective embassies.

Syria also agreed to give urgent consideration to a Turkish proposal to "establish a system that will enable the

monitoring of the security-enhancing measures and their effectiveness."

A Turkish delegation visited Damascus late last month to discuss the agreement's implementation. SANA said only that "the two sides reaffirmed their concern over implementing the clauses" of the security agreement.

Syria also agreed to use its influence in Lebanon, where it maintains 35,000 troops and exercises enormous control over political life, to secure adoption of the accord by Beirut as well.

"The Turkish and Syrian sides, contingent upon obtaining Lebanon's consent, have agreed to take up the issue of the combat against PKK terrorism in a tripartite framework," the agreement said.

The agreement also pays equal tribute to the mediation efforts of Tehran and Cairo — at the time more weight was given to the role of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Turkish ecologists block Bosphorus in anti-tankers protest

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish environmental groups briefly halted traffic across the Bosphorus at Istanbul on Sunday in protest at tankers that use the narrow strait to haul oil to Europe, Anatolia news agency reported.

About 40 organisations took part in the demonstration, in which vessels formed a chain across the channel, displaying banners with slogans such as "Turkey's straits are not an oil pipeline," and "no to oil," it said.

The demonstration ended without incident. Around 60 million tonnes of oil are shipped through Turkish straits every year, and Turkey fears it is only a matter of time before there is a major accident.

It is pushing for a \$4 billion pipeline to be built from Baku, the capital of oil-rich Azerbaijan, to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in southern Turkey.

American oil companies are against this on cost grounds, preferring cheaper options of pipelines to the Black Sea ports of Novorossiysk in Russia and Supsa in Georgia.

That would still require tanker shuttles to get the product to industrialised markets.

Turkey says that this would cause a tripling of oil traffic through the Bosphorus, the narrow channel between European and Asian Turkey. It has threatened to boycott oil from Azerbaijan and limit oil tanker traffic through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles if the Baku-Ceyhan route is not selected.

The final decision, expected next month, depends on the recommendation of the Azerbaijan International Operating Company (AIOC), a consortium of 11 oil majors working with the Azerbaijani state oil company SOCAR.

Arafat: 'Our weapons are ready' for statehood

(Continued from page 1)

Noting Arafat's renewed threats to declare a state, Netanyahu told reporters that a final settlement should be reached in negotiations, and Arafat's threats were undermining the Wye agreement.

"This endangers the entire Oslo agreement and casts a very dark shadow over the Wye agreement, as well," he said.

"I suggest the Palestinian Authority and its leadership refrain from these kind of statements in order to facili-

tate the movement of the peace process."

Netanyahu aide David Bar-Illan said Israel would incorporate areas under its control, such as Jewish settlements and army bases, in response to any attempts to declare statehood unilaterally.

Speaking in a radio address broadcast Sunday, Arafat sought to allay Israeli fears of an independent Palestinian state, saying it will be the "bridge of love and peace."

In a 30-minute broadcast on the official Voice of

Palestine, Arafat coupled his appeal with a warning to Islamists and their supporters in the Arab World that he would not tolerate interference.

"We are not going to allow anyone to attack our dream and to destroy our Palestinian national project," he said, adding anti-Israel attacks now would provide Israel with an excuse to back out of the agreement to hand over land.

Arafat made a similar threat to establish a Palestinian state at a rally in the West Bank town of

Nablus on Saturday, the tenth anniversary of his declaration of independence for Palestinians.

Following attacks attributed to Islamists on an Israeli school bus and a Jerusalem market, the time table for implementing the land-for-security accord has been delayed.

Bar-Illan said Netanyahu called Arafat and told him there would be a delay because of what has happened since the Wye summit last month and the need for approval by the Israeli Knesset, which opens a two-

day debate on Monday.

"There will be a few days delay in the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from these areas," Bar-Illan told The Associated Press.

He added that the first group of Palestinian prisoners would be set free about the time Israel carries out a withdrawal from two per cent of the West Bank.

Jewish settlers got their first look at official maps of the planned withdrawal on Sunday in a meeting with the four-member cabinet team overseeing the drafting of the maps.

A whole town chases pigs

LISBON (AP) — Portuguese pig farmers forced police to bring home the bacon Saturday, releasing dozens of piglets in a central square to demand an increase in government aid. Farmers set the squealing pigs loose outside the agriculture ministry at dawn. Police chased them across the large Praça do Comercio square, local media reports said. Firefighters were called in to assist. Local people joined the chase, loading the squirming animals into their cars. Roast piglet is a popular, but expensive dish in Portugal.

Chelsea coach Rix faces under-age sex charge

LONDON (R) — Former England soccer international Graham Rix will appear in a London court next month charged with having sex with a minor and indecently assaulting her on three occasions, police said on Sunday. Rix, 41, a former Arsenal player who won 17 caps in his international career, is now a coach at Premier League club Chelsea. A police spokesman said Rix was accused of unlawful intercourse with a girl under the age of 16, the age of heterosexual consent in Britain, in February and of indecently assaulting the same person twice in January and once in February.

'Eating turkey is a murder'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Joaquin Phoenix won't be serving drumsticks at his Thanksgiving dinner table. Phoenix, a strict vegetarian, appears in a new TV commercial for the activist group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, trying to convince Americans that eating turkey is murder. In the commercial, Phoenix, whose latest film is "Clay Pigeons," is shown on a supermarket shopping spree and the sight of a frozen turkey display prompts him to call PETA for vegetarian recipes.

Young British portrayed as liberal

LONDON (R) — Britain's "Millennial Generation" — young people who will be around the age of 21 at the turn of the century — want to be millionaires and believe that determination is a better pre-requisite for success than privilege or connections. A snapshot survey of young Britons portrayed them as liberal and willing to take risks yet still with their sights fixed on a happy marriage with children.

Greg Kinnear loses spot light due to gel

NEW YORK (AP) — Greg Kinnear says his hair helped get him his first movie role but may have prevented him from landing a spot on MTV. The Oscar-nominated actor for "As Good As It Gets" tells Redbook magazine in its December issue he caught the eye of director Sydney Pollack while hosting the cable television programme "Talk Soup." Pollack apparently liked the way Kinnear made fun of his own hair and invited him to audition for "Sabrina." "I'm proof that good accidents happen, sometimes." But his hair may also have cost him an MTV veejay slot. "This was back in the '80s, so let's just say there might have been a little neon and maybe just a dollop of gel," Kinnear said.